THE COLLEGE STUDENT THINKING IT THROUGH

JESSIE A. CHARTERS

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THE COLLEGE STUDENT THINKING IT THROUGH

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To

CHARLES W. GILKEY

AND

GERALDINE BROWN GILKEY

WHO ARE

THINKING THROUGH LIFE'S PROBLEMS

WITH STUDENTS ALL OVER

AMERICA

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PROLOGUE

We who are old are wondering. We are wondering about the college student. East and west, south and north, the college student is a fairly new creature in this late civilization of ours. Whence does he come, and whither does he go?

We who are old look from our window upon young boys and girls going blithely by to school. They troop by the hundred to the high school around the corner. Every day some thousands congregate on the university campus at the foot of the street. As I sit under my study lamp to-night I see ten thousand, a hundred thousand students sitting under their study lamps. To-night the students and I are thinking, What is the meaning of it all?

I have an idea that young people are suffering more consciously than they did a generation ago. Not that this is a new thing for youth. In every reconstructive age it has been the youth who have been the melting pot. The young men who sought after Socrates were in the same case as the young men to-day.

Why do boys and girls go to college? What do they seek? The law does not enforce education beyond ten or twelve years of school life. Whence the compulsion which sends nearly a million young people onward four, five, eight, or ten years along the highways and byways of human knowledge? Do they know what they are doing, and why? Are they going anywhere?

With all our vocational guidance, our advisory committees, our deans, and proctors, and tutors, and directors, are we sending our students anywhere in particular? And if so, is the road direct and significant? And what are the guideposts along the way? Are the students' own purposes and ideals directing

them? Or can it be that the outworn dreams of an earlier time are holding us, the elders, in thrall, and that we are netting the students in the invisible web of old ideals and traditions?

I write to you most of all, you students who are sitting tonight under your study lamps, wondering what life is about, subconsciously moving to the window to draw the curtain against the night outside. Deep within us all is a fear of the unknown, of the shadow behind our back, of the night outside.

For several years you have been asking me the questions which haunt you. I have changed situations and problems and the occasional names enough so that your comrades in college will not recognize you. I have taken the liberty of improving your spelling, and of rearranging your sentences to meet the accepted usage known as "rules of grammar." But otherwise your letters to me, and the papers which you wrote so freely under the promise of confidential anonymity, are quoted just as you wrote them. So, as nearly as may be, I have given the gist of your own problems as you see them.

I have not said all that might be said in discussing some phases of the problems presented, but I have tried hard to give you a basis for developing solutions for yourselves. You know that all education is self-education. So that I have tried to give you "something to go on," a place on which to stand while you remake the universe nearer to your heart's desire.

You who are questioning everything, you who read the new psychology and wonder whether, after all, there is mind; or you who read the new physics and are puzzled by the query, What is matter, and force?—it is to you I write. Just now we—all of us—seem to be at the place where the old philosopher Descartes began. He dismissed every assumption and preconception and, bare-handed, came to grips with the problem of life. You all know how he said that, even though he dispensed with every premise, belief, and dogma, nevertheless something was still left—"thinking," *"I think."* From the self-

evident given fact, *"I think,"* he derived the conclusion, *"Therefore I am." "Cogito, ergo sum."* The first absolutely necessary conclusion was *I exist.* A *person* thinks—*I* do the thinking, *I* am existing.

And that is the basic assumption of all our philosophic and social discussion. I am the center of my universe, the sentient being, the measure of values, the point of reference of all my conduct. It is within my experience that the will to live, to feel, to grow goes on.

It is for somebody, anybody, everybody, that most writing is done. But these problems are *yours,* and it is to *you* as an individual person that this book is addressed.

CHAPTER I

SEEKING A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

WHAT about the younger generation? Of recent days much has been said and written about the young people, but who of us has heard them speak for themselves? Are they moved by instinct and irrational impulses alone? or do they too face problems of choosing, of believing, of living?

There have come to me many questions from college students, and some of them are so serious, the "urge to know" is so evident, that these questions asked by them in many institutions have at last become the basis of this little book.

The students themselves shall speak to you often in these pages. Perhaps these young men and women who are in college have given expression to problems of vital importance to all youth everywhere. Indeed, young men and women in industry, in the professions, in business are thinking the same thoughts, wondering about the same world troubles, and striving to understand the same mysteries. So, perchance, these questions of the college student will speak for all of you; and for all of you everywhere, at work or at play, these discussions are written.

In this first chapter I have brought together some questions which have been asked about the meaning of life. Chesterton says that the greatest thing about any person "is the kind of philosophy he keeps." It is true that our own troubles seem more real, more serious, more severe than those of anyone else, and it may help some day, when our thought has been baffled in trying to find out the meaning of things, to see how others have the same fight.

And these are some of the things my college friends have written to me.[1]

The student speaks. "My problem is not one of any definite occasion, but, rather, a mental problem. I seem to grope for the use and reasons for things that seem settled for most people. I enjoy analyzing things and situations, but when I try to analyze the things that mean most to me, I hit a stone wall.

"Education might be given for an example. I am happiest when in school, but the thought continually occurs, what do education and an intelligent mind mean? We are looking for happiness; are not the peasants who find it in their simple life just as well off as we, with our complicated life? What I feel in need of is an understanding of the relations between things; I came to the psychology class in hopes to settle a few relations. Many times psychology interests me intensely, but with it comes the thought, Where does this lead to? What does it accomplish?

"*We seem to move in circles, never arriving.* Life is supposed to be continually in a state of progress, but one can't work endlessly and not hope to arrive sometime. That is my problem—finding what we should look for. I have not arrived at anything; all is confusion except that I must go on looking, but how it would help to have some definite aim in view."

"How do you explain or account for the 'unrest' that is in the youth of to-day? I for one—and how many more are there

[1] Our plan is to quote, verbatim wherever possible, from letters which have been handed in from time to time by students in many classes and in many colleges. For the most part, the papers were written anonymously, though often they were accompanied by a signature, and asked for an answer. Occasionally problems have been taken from private letters, and even from life stories in which I have had to play a part. Out of one set of 44 papers from women, 13 stated personality problems, many of them urgent; 10 were problems of a career or life-work; 4 were questioning the value of college or criticizing its fundamental organization; 7 were religious problems, and 5 were of love and marriage (exclusive of the career-marriage problems).

In another group of 94 papers, this time from men, 27 were about personality, 22 questioned college, 12 about a life-work, 4 of religion, 8 of sex and love.

More than one thousand four hundred persons have written and have given a total of over five thousand problems.

with just these same problems!—I feel so entirely *dissatisfied with everything.*

"I cannot strike on any definite thing I want—yet I do not want to drift all my life, after the fine education my parents have given me. How can one find something real to do—and be happy? This restlessness tends to break down all ambition, and what will become of our lives if we cannot find some purpose in life, or a plan? This cannot be just a 'notion,' because when one reaches my age one should have some purpose in life.

"I am worried about my apparent hatred of life. Of course, everyone comes to realize the hardships of life are many, the joys are few and evanescent—still, they love to live. And I do not. For I hate life. Why?"

"I myself am my main problem. I do not seem to have any interest in anything nor to care about anything. And I am not speaking for myself alone, but for so many girls in this university. There is an air of dissatisfaction and discontent and everyone seems to be tired—tired of school and everything connected with it.

"Where are we going? What is it all about? Am I justified in spending my father's money and my time attending college for four of the best years of my life?

"Theoretically it is right. One should have a general knowledge of many things in order to understand this complex life of ours. But, practically, we get merely a smattering of a great many ideas, which serve as interruptions and tend to lead one from one path into many and confusing ways."

"The thing that strikes me most forcibly is that though they tell us that most of the ideas and institutions upon which we have pinned our faith are wrong, entirely or in part, they do not tell us what to do about it.

"I can see clearly now that a great many of my former ideas were founded upon mistaken notions and teachings, and I have lived long enough to discover that some of the laws I was brought up to believe were infallible do not work as they were supposed to, *but* what to do about it? Are our institutions, especially the church, university, and marriage, at which most of the bricks seem aimed, really inadequate? Or is the fault with the individuals connected with them?

"Also, isn't the sweeping away of dependence upon and responsibility to a higher power a terrible temptation to selfishness? I feel that so far college has made me think; and psychology has given me some problems of which I was blissfully unconscious, but hasn't given me any answers. I feel as though I were walking in the dark."

Re-creation is continuous. How can one get at the roots of the restlessness, the sense of futility, the feeling of fumbling in darkness, the going and going but never arriving?

The first thing to recognize, students, is that in your baffling problems you are but repeating age-old history. Reflective thinking, at least from the very dawn of translated records, has busied itself with these same problems. It does help us, does it not, to think that our unrest and failure to *know,* to be sure of ourselves, is not unique in this generation—that it is not peculiar to the present, but has always happened to all *thinking* people?

Every institution in the world to-day is modern—it has broken down and has been remade a thousand times in ten thousand years. Every belief, habit, or custom has come to its present state through centuries of flux and adaptation. The *family* of America is not a stabilized institution, nor is it so in France, nor in Russia, nor in China. In each of these nations the family is different, and is progressively attempting to adapt itself to the peculiar civilizations in which it operates. What is true of the family is also true of other institutions. The *church* has gone through centuries of evolution. Those who believe that "what was good for Paul and Silas is good enough for me" do not know whereof they speak. It is impossible, disastrous, to reinstate an outgrown past. The *school* of to-day has never before been in existence. New years, new problems, and new efforts at solutions; new institutions to carry onward into life these new solutions.

What is true of the family, the church, the school, is also true of religions. We cannot speak of *a* religion. There is a

religion for each generation and for each human being in the world, built up in his life out of the matrix of the tradition and life into which he is born. So for education, government, marriage, play, arts, and crafts. The institution is born afresh in the life of each individual, or in the community life of each group. It is never adequate; it never fully satisfies the thoughtful individual; it never brings the millennium to the group.

An ever-new world means ever-new problems. You who are young have not yet the *historic perspective.* The most profound contribution of experience to your maturity is a world view and an historic perspective. It is that which you are now seeking, and the seeking signifies itself within you as restlessness, dissatisfaction.

Everywhere there is a problem—to the Jew one, to the Gentile another; the Persians have their own unrest, the Medes another dissatisfaction. And the historic perspective consists in recognizing that the problems are as old as self-consciousness. When the serpent gave Eve the apple, and she did eat, the desire to know the unknowable was implanted in the mind of man.

What will we do with this necessity of thinking, of questioning, this inner urge driving us we know not whither, this feeling of want of we know not what? This is the common heritage of the race. And each one of us *must* do something about it; each must take a fresh start if he would build up a satisfying philosophy of life. Life around us is demanding that we *think,* by breaking down our old notions, by exposing our false gods, by requiring that we *think for ourselves.* No one can think for you. Each *must* make his own philosophy—and the philosophy which satisfied one falls far short of satisfying another. "So was it when the world began."

"But," you say, "how can I start to reconstruct a world? I seem to be lost. I don't know what to think, what to believe, how to act. I don't know what is right and true of the things I was taught, and especially I do not know how to make for

myself a new religion, or a new system of beliefs about marriage, or a philosophy of education. If I decide to accept one thing as true, it contradicts something else. Speakers and things I read not only contradict each other, they often contradict themselves, and how can *I* decide upon any sort of a system that will satisfy even myself?"

Beginning to think things through. We must always start our own thinking by consciously or unconsciously "giving up" some of our old ideas; that is, we eventually must face the notion that there are some things which we have previously accepted but which we can no longer accept. Our troubles all arise from having once accepted some things as "given," as facts, which later do not agree with life as we find it, yet we cannot quite make up our minds to give them up. They have become very precious to us.

Most of us come to college with certain things "given." (This is the word the philosophers use for assumptions, or facts, or concepts which are accepted.) That is, we come with a system of habits built up about some central idea which has never been consciously questioned—often it has never come clearly into consciousness at all. Or if questioned, we have acted according to the belief so long that we have come to love it, even though it may not be true.

Here are some of the "givens"—that is, habit systems—with which we start our simple adolescent life: that we will fall in love, marry the right person, have a nice family of five children, make money enough to live comfortably, have a creditable profession, be a "solid citizen," live to be gray and have grandchildren around the Christmas tree, and finally die decorously to the tune of "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

Or perhaps this is a "given" of our adolescence: Marriage means the union in holy bonds of matrimony of a man and woman who establish a home for children. Or this: God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; God is love, God is the Lawgiver and the Order of the Universe; the Father of all.

Again: Good boys and girls go on to school as long as the family money holds out; then they will be fitted for an efficient, noble life. Or once more: Educated people are wiser, better, more apt to succeed, more respected, and, in general, of a higher order than uneducated people.

But, alas! simple faith does not last long for the thinking person. The *sturm und dräng* of awakening mind causes the boy or girl to question, first parental perfection, then parental authority, then the church, the law, and the ultimate goal of humanity. This is nothing new under the sun. Adolescence has always brought this questioning of "givens."

The first step: Face your problem. Suppose one consciously faces these "givens." If some of them seem now questionable, let us decide to make a fresh start. What is there to start with? Well, first of all, *This age-old necessity of thinking for ourselves.* We must have a philosophy of life, even though it come with birth pangs—for it must come. Of one thing you can be certain, that if you face the problems one by one, *not trying to solve any one of them finally,* they will in the course of time order themselves in your philosophy of life—not all solved, for no man may find the ultimate answer to all of them, but evolving for themselves workable hypotheses by which you may live happily day by day.

Your first step is not to run away from life, but to state your problems as clearly as possible and say: "Here you are. Let me look at you straight. You are one of those problems which have troubled mankind since the world began. Your final answer may be in the realm of the unknowable. Perhaps I cannot now satisfy myself with an answer."

Thus you struggle with your problems, pressed on by the inborn urge to *think,* and to find a philosophy of life which will give you some sort of satisfaction, determined to come to some sort of workable basis for living, if not to some ultimate conclusions. And that too is human and vital and universal. Some people are satisfied with an easy truce, some only with

a hard victory. Possibly you are never satisfied; for you can never know the unknowable, and when you think you do, whatever may be your chronological age, you have become old and set and dogmatic, for "final" answers to the unknowable are dogma.

Turn back to the beginning of this chapter and read again the ways in which students have tried to put their difficulties into words.

You "grope for the use and reason of things"—what does it all mean, this life? "We seem to move in circles, never arriving." We are "dissatisfied with everything," like the dove sent forth from the ark, who "found no rest for the sole of her foot, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth."

Perhaps the dove of query which you have sent forth to the pages of this book may bring you back an olive leaf of hope. And, if herein you find a small mountaintop, from which you may explore a new world of reality as it emerges from the dark waters of doubt, then indeed you may go forth and build up your altars of knowledge. Your life shall be fruitful and multiply upon the earth. But you must set out to reconstruct your own world—you must send forth your own dove, and not sit back in the darkest corner of your ark wishing you had never been set down in a world subject to storm and flood.

Trying to solve problems is a life-long task. This, then, is to be your method: To examine your problems one by one, to recognize them for what they are, to search history for hints of solutions, ultimately to work out for yourself your own answers or hypotheses which will enable you to make a new heaven and a new earth within your own experience. These are the problems about which you are thinking: you ask, "Why do I exist? why was I ever born? what is the meaning of the universe? What is the Great Unknown? And why cannot we know it? What is beyond the farthest star, and before the beginning?"

I have tried to set forth a fundamental *fact* of philosophy which is extremely important for you. It is neither a problem nor a solution, *but a fact of experience.*

The necessity of thinking, the insatiable urge to know the unknowable, began with the dawn of consciousness. It is your social heritage as a human being. In your questions about reality, about the meaning of life and the nature of God, you are but repeating the questions which were those first recorded by primitive man. The unanswered question has been preserved in idol and altar and hieroglyphic, while millions of answered questions have perished from the face of the earth. We have not the sciences of the ancients, but we have their philosophies. They left almost no trace of their inventions, but their religions live to-day in our own religious rites.

The fact of life with which you are to reckon is that it is decreed that you *must* wonder, and worry, and try to decide for yourself what no man may finally discover or decide for any other beside himself. You must struggle with your own problems, you have an inborn *urge to think,* you *must* find a philosophy of life which will satisfy, you *must* come to a workable basis for living, if not to some ultimate conclusions.

Boys and girls who will pass my window to-morrow, men and women who are to-night thinking of your fiercest troubles, do you know that your unrest, your questioning, your curious peering into the dark are symptoms of a growing mind and soul? Were you not questioning, your soul would be dormant.

"But," you say, "it all makes me so unhappy. I want action. I want to do something about it." Something may be done about it. Indeed, much must be done about "it"; and now we shall study together various presentments of the problems of life.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION—WHAT IS IT?

OLD-FASHIONED times and modern times! Antique and modernistic furniture. The older generation and the younger generation—these terms mean an eternal clash between the conservative holders-on to the past, and the radical tryers-out of the new.

Nowhere in modern life is the divergence between the old and the new more violent and distressing than in the field of religion. Young people are in a peculiarly difficult situation, because a religion has been instilled into them from the beginning of their lives, the religion of their mothers and fathers. Religion is sacred; it is bound up with all the virtues, the habits, the loyalties which always cling to childhood, to early home training, to law-and-order, to respect for the older tradition.

But childhood and implicit faith in and adoration of the past are outgrown. The present is always looking toward the future —and this present is no man's land, neither old nor new. It is here the younger generation "is wandering, confused, now turning backward to the easy and well-known past, now facing forward to the pathless, unknown future."

The inner conflict between loyalties and loves and habits, and new knowledge of science, of social facts, of unrealized values is frequently little short of tragic. Family peace and happiness may be broken, children may turn against parents, parents against children. The youth's inner emotional conflict often produces physical disturbances and mental bewilderment.

Some of my young friends have written me about their spiritual needs.

"I think that perhaps my greatest problem has to do with religion. I'll have to admit that I'm completely in a fog as to

what I believe, what I should believe, and why. It wasn't so very many years ago that I never gave the question a thought and simply accepted everything I was told without a thought of questioning it as regards truth. I was certainly in a more comfortable frame of mind than I am now!

"I would like some course that would help students to reconcile the Bible with modern science and with modern events. I would like something that would help me to formulate a few definite beliefs and theories out of the jumble that is at present filling my mind."

"One problem I have wanted to solve is the problem of religion. It has caused me a lot of worry for the past two years. Most of the profs in college speak of it lightly, but do not bother to explain why.

"I think all people coming to college get the same jolt, and I feel, unless someone can explain to me whether or not Christ lived or give me something tangible to base my reasons for being a Christian on, I shall lose all my early training in Christianity."

"Why does one 'naturally' (?) lose one's original and youthful faith in religion? This may not express what I mean, but I feel myself constantly slipping away from caring about the things which formerly were most sacred to me.

"When I was in high school I was most devoted in all my church connections. I really was sincerely and earnestly trying to follow what I believed to be Christ's standards. I felt sorry for others who seemed simply to go to church for form, and didn't truly have a heart interest in it.

"I still go to church. I keep the Sabbath somewhat, but I can't seem to keep the same feeling of a personal God. It seems to me I act according to whether I believe a thing hurts or not, not according to whether I might cause someone else to blunder by my acts.

"Just at the time when I should have more of a World-Consciousness, I seem to have developed a selfish standard of behavior. I am not satisfied with myself, or happy."

"I am now half-way between the agnostic and the fundamental stage of religion. I go to church, take communion,

repeat the creed, and pray. But it seems that often this is just rigamarole, because I am very much in doubt about God.

"I realize that one must translate the Bible intelligently and all of that, but the more I think about it the more dubious I become. If man is simply a high form of animal, with great intelligence, civilization, appreciation for beauty, I still do not see why this high form of animal should claim a God, if lower ones don't have one.

"If God is love, God is kind, God is merciful, why does he make the mistakes he does, and cause the miserable suffering of innocent people through things like cancer and leprosy, and let degraded criminals go free? Or why has he created love, and then spilled it around unequally and caused suffering from unrequited love and all that? (*No!* I'm *not* disappointed in love!)

"Again, if you think of the earth as one among millions of planets with life on them, where does God come in?

"But *you* can't help me."

And that is true, my dear girl. *I* cannot help you. You are your own best help, and you are thinking through this soul-trying problem; some day you will find God in your own heart.

"Do people have souls, and do we have an after life? You ask people and they all give a different answer. I don't know how it could be proven, but if there is a way it could, I don't believe there would be so much misunderstanding, and religion would be so much easier."

"Perhaps there is a solution somewhere for this problem, but I doubt it seriously, the problem of determining upon a religion that will satisfy.

"After floating along through life until the second year in college, and then with an awful thud and bang to become conscious that there are people who say there is no God—why, it's like being told that there is no Santa Claus. First comes dullness, then interest in some idea, then indifference, then more interest, and so on. It becomes very straining on the nerves and health."

Have you ever wondered why it is that problems of religion have such a tremendous importance in our lives, and have

had such importance throughout the long, long history of the race? Can you think of anything else which has had such a dominating place? What is my relation to the universe, and how is the universe related to me? These two problems have been the paramount concern of peoples since the world began—troubling more than the question, What shall I eat? or Whom shall I love? or Where shall I pitch my tent? Disturbing, commanding, is the inner urge to know the *why,* the *whence,* the *whither.*

Religion is itself an experience of seeking unity. This insatiable urge to *know* the Divine, to *experience* the totality of the universe, to *satisfy* the unsatisfied craving for completeness—*this is religion.* If we could prove the Divine by logical reasoning, much of our religious experience would disappear in practical, obvious, everyday knowledge. It has often happened that worship of the mysterious has disappeared when the mysterious has come to be understood and explained.

When the tremendous, unknowable Totality of the universe presses within us, drives us forward with profound compulsion to seek the fullness of life, to live in unity with law and order, to find the treasures of creative inquiry, that indeed is the demonstration of God, that is religious experience.

Religious experience is possible only because of the inner compulsion to relate our own individual, isolated, finite personality with the universal and infinite. And the universal, the infinite, is unprovable and unknowable. Would you *prove* God? He can be proved only by *experiencing* him, not by a logical argument.

The psychology of religious experience. "When I took my first course in philosophy I did so because I thought I might find the answer to the problem which is the greatest problem in all the universe. How does mankind come to be religious? Why is he religious? Is the idea of God just an idea which *happened* to come to somebody, and has been handed down more or less by accident? Or is religion a necessary part of all experience—and if so, what is its 'survival value'?

"You must know I had gotten the idea of evolution in my freshman survey course, and I thought everything must have had at some time a function which preserved it, but I could not see just how religion came in. So I took philosophy to find out. I must say that I'm not very clear yet as to what the religious experience does for us—or ever did, for that matter.

"I think if I knew something more about what religion does in my life and why, I could grow more in a spiritual way."

What is the psychology of religious experience? What is its origin? How do we happen to have religion? What do we mean by religion? What by religious experience?

Let us start with the last question first: What do we mean by religious experience? My own belief is that religious experience is a complex consciousness characterized by a unique idea-emotion content. The *idea* is named "God." The emotion is characterized by such a word as "Reverence," or "Worship." When our mind is filled with a God-idea and our heart with a Worshiping Emotion, we are possessed by a religious experience.

We are having a religious experience when we feel worshipful toward some great superhuman force. We may call it God, or Good, or Truth, or Intelligence, Buddha, Jehovah, or Jupiter, or Sun, or whatever name our training has taught us to use for personification.

When we "worship God" we sometimes speak of feeling *love* of God, or of *fearing* God, or of the *awe* of God. These are all words to describe some kind of an emotion. When some such emotion as one of these is very strong, and when at the same time it is directed toward *God*—we are having a religious experience. We do not always have the same idea of God—indeed, we never have the same idea of God twice, since our ideas change and grow as we ourselves grow. God may sometimes be thought of as a Spirit, or God-the-Father; or an abstraction, as an Ideal, or the Infinite, or God-the-Regulator of the universe.

Religious experiences occur with us only under special circumstances, but are typical, satisfying, constructive for our lives. For example, we sit down to a meal and look around at our friends or our family assembled there at the table; we see the food ready to our needs; we sense the atmosphere of safety and happiness. Perhaps there comes to us a moment of exaltation of spirit, a thankfulness to Something Higher that to our undeserving self should come this bountiful moment. In ancient times the family dinner table which was attended by all, which was safe and bountiful, where peace and happiness prevailed, was indeed an accomplishment so uncertain as to be a gift from the gods rather than an attainment of finite effort. They knew too well the evil fortune of drought and marauding enemies. Our own Puritan fathers, and even less distant fathers, had reason to experience the Divine Beneficence when they sat down unmolested to food and drink. Out of the splendid occasions when peace and plenty were present there arose the religious expression of a prayer of thanksgiving to God. We still have the Grace at Table, we still "say the blessing." And sometimes we still experience with the rite the religious emotion of which it is the expression.

The religious experience occurs (1) when the human being is caught in a difficulty from which it seems no human power can rescue him; (2) when he is in the presence of a situation which seems to be the gift of divine mercy, since no human power could have produced it to order for him if the forces of nature had been set against him; and (3) when he is the witness of forces seemingly operating under omnipotent control, since no human being could control them without superhuman help, nor could any human being conceivably institute them.

In the first situation we pray for help, for guidance, for mercy; in the second situation we pray a prayer of thanksgiving; in the third we are overwhelmed with awe and worship.

These, as I see it, are the basic characteristics of a religious

experience, the typical situations in which it occurs, and the typical responses which the individual tends to make. Prayer, awe, worship are the characteristic religious attitudes as relating the human being to his universe.

If you do not agree with me, I think it must be because your religious experiences occur in so many situations somewhat different, because they vary in intensity and complexity through so many degrees, and because they really do take so many different forms.

I want to call your attention to an important question. We say, sometimes there is one idea-emotion in the religious experience, sometimes another. Sometimes we fear an avenging God, again we call upon an omnipotent God to save us in our extremity. What causes the difference in religious experiences? The answer is self-evident. The critical need of the moment calls forth whatever idea and emotion are necessary to meet that need. We call for help when we cannot help ourselves; we thank the Good God when we believe he has come to our rescue. Since this conception of the differences in our experiences is basic in our psychology, we shall return to it later.

But let us go back for a moment to see how religious experience is unique and fundamental by comparing or contrasting it with some of our other experiences. We shall first choose an experience that is so closely akin to the religious that it is easy to confuse them, namely, the *æsthetic experience,* or consciousness of beauty. The æsthetic experience is a complex of an idea and an emotion or "thrill." Suppose you are looking at a fine copy of the Venus of Melos; you perceive the statue, your mind runs over various ideas or thoughts about it; at the same time you are thrilled by the symmetry, poise, flowing lines, that is, by all the "beauty" intrinsic in the statue. Or you listen to great music. You hear the tones, your body sways to the rhythm, your very soul is filled with the beauty of it.

Or to take a social *experience* obviously closely related to religious experience. You see a shivering, ragged newsboy on

a windy corner. It is Christmas Eve. Immediately your heart goes out to his misfortune and you speak to him. He proves to be a proud, manly little fellow, struggling against odds to help support the family. He says to you, "Do you know, sir, where I could find an odd job to do to-morrow—Christmas Day, you know? I would like to earn a dollar for a pair of gloves to give to my mother for a Christmas gift. Oh, no, sir, will you please excuse me, but I couldn't quite accept the money. I want to give her something of which she can be proud, and so far we have not wanted any form of charity. But I would like to work for it to-morrow if you have any errands, or snow to shovel, or books to be moved." Your understanding of the problem of another, your sympathy, your desire and plan to share the problems of another, make this a social experience.

Another social experience is further removed from the exaltation of sentiment which makes this first one akin to religion. You see a pretty girl, a stranger, across the street. Suddenly her foot slips, she falls, drops her books, her purse, and as you spring to her aid you notice that she is pale and in pain. She has sprained her ankle. She speaks to you, her voice is soft and cultured. You gather together her possessions, help her to a doorstep, and call a taxi. All these things are incidental to the pleasure you feel in making this friend, in learning of her fortitude, her sense of humor, her reticence, her little-girlish ways. Perhaps she powders her nose, she certainly straightens her hat, even though her ankle hurts terribly. We would call this another social experience.

We might describe a *physical experience,* which is intrinsically different from any other experience; not entirely, for somewhere even the physical experience sums up all our past and all our present. But when we are swimming for the sake of the joy of the sensation and motion, the focus of the attention, the idea-emotion, "swimming-pleasure," which specifically characterizes the experience is unique—not like a social experience, nor a religious experience, nor an æsthetic experience. Or

when we are studying very hard a difficult problem in algebra, or working out an obscure translation in Latin, we are centered in an *intellectual experience.* Or perhaps we have to decide a knotty *moral problem,* is it right to cheat a little in our class work? There are pros and cons, and we have to weigh the whole matter carefully. There is a central emotion, and an idea about it which is very different from the pros and cons of a problem in mathematics.

Is it clear, then, that we do have varieties of experience characterized by differences in both ideational and emotional content?

If you have followed to this point, we are ready to go on with a closer study of religious experiences which are troubling so many students in so many ways.

A little while ago we described the religious experience as characterized by an idea of God and an emotion of worship. It is the analysis of this religious experience which gives us our serious troubles. Before we ask the question which clouds the lives of so many students, namely, the authenticity of religion for life, let us examine into the origin of religious experience in the race so far as history furnishes records.

The origin of religions. Lewis Browne, in *This Believing World,* thinks religion originated in fear. His opening words are these: "In the beginning there was fear; and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man. At every turn it whelmed over him, leaving him no moment of ease. With the wild soughing of the wind it swept through him; with the crashing of the thunder and the growling of lurking beasts. All the days of man were gray with fear, because all his universe seemed charged with danger. Earth and sea and sky were set against him; with relentless enmity, with inexplicable hate, they were bent on his destruction. . . . From experience he knew that fighting was useless, that the enemy objects, the falling bowlders that maimed him, and the flooding streams that wrecked his hut, were in some uncanny way proof

against his spears and arrows. That was why he was finally forced to resort to more subtle methods of attack. Since blows could not subdue the hostile rocks or streams, our ancestor tried to subdue them with magic. He thought words might avail; strange syllables uttered in groans, or meaningless shouts accompanied by beating tom-toms. Or he tried wild dances. Or luck charms. If these spells failed, then he invented others; if those in turn failed, then he invented still others. Of one thing he seemed most stubbornly convinced: that *some* spell would work. Somehow the hostile things around him *could* be appeased or controlled, he believed; somehow death *could* be averted. Why he should have been so certain, no one can tell. It must have been his instinctive adjustment to the conditions of a world that was too much for him. Self-preservation must have forced him to that certainty, for without it self-preservation would have been impossible. Man had to have faith in himself, or die—and he would not die. So he had faith, and developed religion."[1]

Religious experience originated (so does all other instinctive experience) as a fundamental necessity for self-preservation. Out of man's consciousness of helplessness to control environment, out of his conscious desire to live, developed a sense of supernatural power and of dependence upon that power.

But not from the human emotion of fear alone could have come a religious experience, with its hope of safety, of mercy, of Divine Providence. The old Scholastics had many arguments attempting to prove that God really exists.

Professor Flint many years ago wrote a book called *Theism,* which is even now a most interesting discussion for students who are anxious to read somewhat about the history of the development of ideas of God. I suggest, too, that you read Andrew D. White's *Warfare Between Science and Theology.* From these, or from some book on the history of philosophy,

[1] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers, New York.

you will be able to learn about the Scholastics, and their "arguments for the existence of God." I shall give you a simplified statement of some of them. *The Cosmological Argument:* The universe exists, therefore, it must be caused; the Great First Cause is God. *The Ontological Argument,* or argument of existence: The very *idea* of God implies the *existence* of God. "Existence cannot be separated from essence." Mankind has a concept of perfection, of the infinite, of the absolute—concepts which could never have been actually experienced in this imperfect, finite, and limited world. The very existence of these concepts in human consciousness necessarily signifies the existence of perfection, infinity, Absolute—God; since the concepts did not come from finite experience they must have been revealed to intuition. *The Theological Argument,* or argument of design, plan, or purpose: Everything in the universe fits together. The universe obeys laws more powerful than any human designer could plan or enforce—indeed, even transcending human powers of comprehension. God is the Great Lawgiver, becoming manifest to us, in us, and through us as his agents.

And these are the metaphysical arguments coming down through all the thinkers of the past to our own day, changed, reinterpreted, but still living in the writings of such religious philosophers as Whitehead, Wieman, and Reinhold Niebuhr.

Mankind has an *idea* of God, an *idea* of an infinite, omnipotent, omniscient Being. This could not have arisen in human experience, for human experience is necessarily finite, limited. Therefore this idea must have had its source outside of human experience. It must (according to Kant) come to mankind through intuition: through inspiration, according to the Christian philosophy.

Many historians of religion say that fear—the need—drove man to invent religion. But no invention could have survived in the direst need if it had had no reality, no effectiveness for satisfying that need. The significant thing which Browne and

these others who think that *fear* was the source of an invented God overlook is that dependence on the Divine *worked*. It worked in the cave man's day; it worked for Abraham; it brought the Hebrews out of Egypt; it works for us all to-day. Man's invention of gods to save him from annihilation would have availed nothing, as an invention; but the invented gods were merely a temporary effort to define, to visualize, to put into concrete form the God they were striving to know, the religion they were living.

And so each of us, from the beginning of time, tries to define the God who lives within us, upon whom we call in times of trouble, whom we love and worship, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

Whence came this God-idea. Did it have a "natural" or supernatural origin? To answer that question would be to answer, Whence came life? Whence came mind? These are the tantalizing problems of all thinking—of science and of metaphysics. Science hopes sometime to answer them. Metaphysics sometimes has thought it has answered them. But at present all we can say is *"Agnosco,"* "I do not know."

But this we do know, that religious experience is as old as experience itself, and religions have been universal. Man is thrust into the presence of God through his *fear*. But equally significant is the experience of divine help in his time of *helplessness*. All man's consciousness involves a superior force of which he is a part, with the satisfyingness of the experience of depending upon that force, the release of tension when this great force is accepted into working harmony with life.

We cannot here delve into the tomes of research on the origin of religions. But we think that we have indicated to you the kernel of the historical background: Religion is a fundamental type of experience, originating with man's earliest thinking, a response to his need of help, a panacea to his fear, a release of his powers, a prime satisfaction with living. Had man not conceived a religion, he could not have ruled the earth.

CHAPTER III

OUR OWN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

We were talking upon the sand dune and watching the lake freighters traverse the far horizon, three college girls and I. We had been discussing everything from clothes to sorority expenses, from caste problems to social reforms. Gradually we came closer to our own deeper selves and the deep-seated perplexities of individual adjustment to the universe.

"Of course, I know that there always *has been religion.* The very ancients have left us more vestiges of their religion than of their politics or, perhaps, anything else. But isn't my own tendency to religion just a habit started because my mother taught me an orthodox belief? Sometimes I'm really troubled at my weakness of holding on to outgrown ideas in spite of my better judgment and all the education I have."

Said another girl, questioning:

"Is religion just a childish habit which should be outgrown? Of course, people always have been religious, but that's no reason why they always should be or always will be. We were brought up in the fear of the Lord, but is that any reason why we should be bound by fear—afraid some dreadful calamity will happen if we aren't religious? You know how Job's friends told him to "curse God and die," and we are just superstitious enough to fear that we will die if we deny God."

The third girl had been running the sand through her fingers while watching the western sky. Now she spoke:

"I wonder if we are religious just because our mothers taught us something about God, read the Bible to us, and heard us say our prayers? Somehow I feel as if the beauty of the earth and sky, and friends, and life itself have all contributed, and that, in spite of all the education I have, I'm being more reli-

gious all the time—in fact, even my better judgment and my education all seem to be part of religion."

This conversation may not be reported verbatim two or three years later, but the picture of the earnest girls and the spirit of the occasion rises vividly before me as I write it out for you.

What is the origin of religious experience in our lives? You will have to do your own research, no one can say for you how any experience of yours has arisen, or has developed, or has become transformed. Nevertheless, it is possible for one to sketch such an experience who remembers vividly the thinking and experiencing in the world as it has been these past years. *Ideas* of God are slowly developed from the mother's teachings, reading from the Bible, pictures in the big Bible, Sunday-school cards, and charts. Sermons, stories, Sunday-school lessons, and much thinking contributed to these ideas, so that one came into adolescence some thirty years ago—most of you have done the same more recently than that—with a vague but satisfying idea of God. Although you may have had one or more mental pictures of God, you believe that he is Spirit and cannot be seen. You accept with faith that he is the kind Father, the Watching Care.

Christian religions have complicated a difficult idea of God with the Christ and the Holy Ghost. Until we reach late adolescence, and college, or other contact with critical thinking, we accept the mystical, unanalyzed confusion of such ideas "on faith" as mystery, and essential to our religion.

The "faith of our fathers," which has always seemed to be simple and comforting, is inevitably brought forward for scrutiny by our inner urge to think and question, which was discussed on a preceding page. Your parents went through the same experience, and their parents before them, and so on back through the Reformation, and the beginnings of Christianity, and the whole history of the human race. Our mother, who has come through to a fine religious experience, has in her time and, without being entirely aware of it, still is making

over her religion daily, to meet the changing needs of her life.

A man of eighty years was asked a question about his beliefs. He answered: "That is my belief to-day. I cannot guarantee what it will be next year." We must take the faith in which we were nourished and make it over in the light of this new world of science and art and sociology in which we are living.

There comes the time when the old ideas of God come into conflict with the newer ideas of science (evolution), of history, of ethics, of life itself. The God who had been dimly conceived in our childhood does not fit into the newer world of our maturity.

In my own case it seemed impossible to have a religious experience if I gave up the God I had hitherto worshiped. However, I found to my surprise that my idea of God was not a bit like my mother's idea—she thought herself "orthodox," I considered myself "orthodox." We had been worshiping side by side in the same denomination, we had knelt at family prayers together every evening since I could remember, we had read the same Bible, had seen the same pictures, heard the same sermons, yet we differed so fundamentally in what we "believed" that she thought me "lost," and I knew for myself that I was not a "Christian" in my mother's sense of the word. Yet, our differences were not due to my reading of evolution and philosophy, but dated far back in my experience. Never in my life had I dreamed that anyone could conceive God as my mother did. Then I found to my astonishment that no two adults around me fully agreed. Each was making his own religion.

By this time, in late adolescence, I had begun to ask the inevitable questions: Does God exist? Is there a heaven? Is there immortality? What is the soul? What is life? And mixing up definitions of God, beliefs about him, religious emotions, metaphysical questions, problems of ethical conduct into one grand confusion, I threw it all out at once. This was

my conclusion: "I don't *know* anything about any of it, nobody does. It all means nothing in my young life. I have no more interest in any of it." By the time I was nineteen and reading Ernst Haeckel and other German philosophers, I was entirely through with religion and all it involved. It had no further place in my life; yes, it had been an interesting experience to *have had,* but that was long ago.

Perhaps no one of you has gone so far. You girls and boys, singing college songs, sitting under your greenshaded lights, you are still in the death-pangs of your old habits. You are groping, groping. "Is there a God—dare I doubt him?" And you glance fearfully toward the night outside, hardly remembering that Thomas Aquinas said that he is omniscient and omnipresent. Then, recollecting, you cast doubt out of your heart with a prayer that the all-knowing God will forgive the blasphemy.

I got along well enough without religion for a while—just as I had done for long intervals all my life. All my life I had been aware of definite religious consciousness only during sins, revivals, and serious illnesses. Consequently, in college things went just as well without God as they had with him—for a while.

Then one day something happened. It was not a terrible calamity, but it was sudden, threatening, and I was powerless; I found myself whispering, "Lord, hear my prayer, come to my rescue." I jerked myself up, saying, "Pshaw! That's just the force of habit. How silly to think that *if* there were a God he would bother with trivialities. Besides, there isn't a God. God is neither logical nor necessary."

Another day something else happened, and I found myself whispering, "Oh, God, thank you for happiness." Unexpected and undeserved happiness was flooding the world that morning. But I stopped short. There was no God.

As time went on I found that in spite of all I could do, in spite of logic, of reason, of resolution, religious experiences

insisted upon coming—as of old. They caught me unaware. I worshiped God even when I resolved not to worship and refused to know a God. I might just as well try to avoid physical consciousness, social experience, feelings of right and wrong. My efforts to thrust away the idea of God had little effect upon the strength of the religious experience, although they did have great effect on the *value* of the religious experience for my life. Because my philosophy of life did not make room for religious experience, its intrusion caused extreme dissatisfaction with life as a whole. I was always upset over the whole problem. Religion was obtruding as an intellectual issue—I was tending to become a fanatic as so many "atheists" are. I had to make a point of my "advanced ideas." In other words, I was trying to live an unnatural life rather than a normal one. Until I could develop a philosophy which would incorporate all the facts into a working unity, there was bound to be conflict.

Religious experience a continuous reconstruction. How, then, does one reconstruct a religious experience after going down to bed-rock and giving up everything?

For me it has been simple. No matter what I intellectually decide to believe, or deny, when the religious experience arises it brings with it the appropriate God-idea to meet the moment's need. This is accompanied by the appropriate religious emotion. When we need God we call upon him. We may think we do not know whether there is a God or not, but in our hearts and minds there is a God. It depends upon ourselves whether we allow him to help us.

The germ source of the God-idea is unknown—probably unknowable. The development of the idea in our experience is, partly at least, in our own hands. The God-idea is present. The religious experience is *given*. But, how it shall function in our lives, how God shall serve us, depends upon ourselves.

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you."

We return to the point mentioned pages back. Our religious life is of our own making. It *must be* the outgrowth of *our own past,* it is necessarily devised to meet the need of the present. The God-idea, the Worship-Emotion have a content varying from need to need, never the same, probably never adequate, but always the best our past has to offer us for the present emergency.

We can never shift the responsibility upon another, we cannot say, "Tell us that he is a just God, that he answers prayer, that he is a personal God, that he guarantees immortality." *My* God may do all these things for me, but that would not help *you* a particle. My God cannot be your God, because my need for him is not your need for him.

Let us run down a list of points which will summarize and perhaps clarify the preceding pages of discussion.

1. Our religious *problems* arise out of serious *conflicts* between our instincts, our *old* ideas, and the *new* ideas and situations of modern life.

There is an ever-present tendency toward a religious experience, which takes the form of a worship-emotion and a God-idea. When certain types of situations arise, this religious experience comes to consciousness.

The *content* of this idea of God, and the form of this worship depend upon our past training and reactions. No two persons can possibly have the same religious experience, nor the same definition of God, nor the same forms of worship, nor the same meaning for their religion.

Young people think they have adopted the definitions, creeds, and forms which have been taught in the home, the church, the community at large. Usually, they are unconscious of the fact that from the very beginning of life they had their own unique religion. They think they share with their orthodox community one religion, one conception of God. They are unaware of divergences.

When they leave a situation where their worship-forms and

ideas have become organized into habit-systems of conduct, and go into a new situation, they have to remold their religion. If this new situation is the college world, or some other intellectual world of discussion and debate, the old ideas must be brought up and redefined. Alas! there is not much light in this brilliant new world, not much bed-rock for foundation purposes. As our student said at the beginning of the preceding chapter, "Most of the profs speak of it [religion] lightly, but do not bother to explain why."

The intellectual world of debate is always mulling around the age-old metaphysics of ultimate reality; the logical validity of positing a soul; the possibility of a finite mind formulating concepts of infinity, of eternity, of omnipotence, omniscience, of God, the possibility of mortal man inheriting immortality.

These metaphysical problems are unanswerable for practical satisfactions. One philosopher may satisfy himself with his answer, but the next man must make his own answer, and the next must make a new answer, and so on from the old Greek Thales to our present Humanists.

So the student who was taught at home that God is good and kind and fatherly, comes to college to hear the question, "Is there a God?" The old habits of worship, prayer, repentance, good deeds, church attendance have the very bottom knocked out of them. And so the first step is to cast about and see what old ideas must be reconstructed.

The analysis of the conflict is necessary before a reconstruction can take place. Old ideas must be reconsidered, and a new habit of thinking, feeling, and acting must be built up.

2. The conflict between the old past and the new present involves serious emotional strain. We never give up any kind of old habit without undergoing grievous punishment. When the old life has so woven itself into our sentiments that we think it is good and fine, and we are entirely unsure about the new life, then, indeed, are we "cast upon a tempest of doubt."

Moreover, we feel that in giving up our old ideas and practices we are cutting ourselves off from our old friends and associates, even from our family. Heretofore, we were unconscious of any serious differences between ourselves and our immediate neighbors. Atheists, evolutionists, and freethinkers lived in foreign parts with the heathen and idol worshipers.

When we go to college we suddenly find ourselves in their midst, and partaking of their life, of their beliefs, of their habits. Where there is discussion, fortunately, there is much freethinking.

Our emotional state is then one of terror at finding our past falling away from us; of agony at our own uncertainty, at our lack of anything to tie to, at the absence of a clue to the labyrinth of argument, question, facts into which we are plunged; finally of grief at the desolation which life presents.

3. The basis of reconstruction lies in the solid bedrock fact that *religious experience* is "given." No matter which way we turn, no matter how deep in the labyrinth we get, we are holding the very clue of clues securely in our own hearts if we only could recognize it. As the searchers found the bluebird of happiness in their own home, so is the religious experience always with us. In our most doubtful hours we "call upon God and he is near," though we do not know either that we call, or that it is he who is near.

Ernst Haeckel regrets the "weakness" of men, who in the full strength of their intellect denied God and accepted materialism, but who returned to the faith when old age and death came. Haeckel did not see that he was recounting the unanswerable argument for religious faith.

4. All religion is an individual experience, and no two people can ever have the same meaning for any concept. Not even when two people agree that they believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; not even when they make a long list of questions and agree upon the answers, are they having the same fundamental experience.

Therefore, it follows inevitably that each rational person *must* reconstruct his own religious experience out of the life he is living. If he has once become convinced that God cannot answer prayer, no amount of resolution, or argument, or deliberate "faith" can ever bring back a full satisfaction in a Prayer-answering God. Instead, every prayer will be a subconscious test, a challenge for God to come forth and prove that he will answer prayer.

If you, my friend, are afraid that you must lay aside your childish faith in God's listening ear, do not foolishly cling, and yearn for the past which is no more. Come face to face with the facts. You have heard this argument and that reason against God's usefulness in the prayer situation. Somebody else will tell you of miraculous answers to prayer. You can argue all night, all your life, all the ages, and never reach a satisfying answer on the basis of argument. If you have a genuine doubt of prayer, argument can never convince you. So lay aside the old idea—give it up, if need be, entirely. I advise you, however, not to commit yourself too strongly against it, for some time, when your need is great, you will call upon God, and he will answer. You can *prove* by argument that this cannot be, your friends have proved it many times, there isn't anything in our human reasoning power which enables us to understand, therefore we give up this idea as illogical. But some day He comes—he who "passeth understanding"—and it is simple and natural when we need him we "call upon him and he is near." Logic and argument have nothing to do with it.

If you are interested in getting all that philosophy has to give you, read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason,* and the *Critique of Judgment.* Reason can never give us knowledge of the unknowable. Only faith can bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite, between God and man.

And we, therefore, turn now to the Psychology of Faith as a basis for reconstructing our shattered world of religion.

CHAPTER IV

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAITH

"Why is it that college unsettles everybody? I'm sure I got a good education in high school, as far as it went, but it did not make me doubt God, and the Bible, and heaven—or at any rate some existence hereafter with its rewards for trying to do right. . . .

"I don't think anybody at college has said anything specific, but the whole atmosphere is 'scientific,' which seems to me nothing but materialism."

"What is this conflict between science and religion? I wish somebody would really explain it to me. I know that in physics we are taught that all the universe is made of atoms—that is, electrons in motion; and that in biology we find out that men are descended from the lower animals, and all living things go back to the amœba, perhaps. Of course, that contradicts the Bible. I was not one who ever worshiped the Bible or took much stock in Genesis, anyway, but it does bother me to account for our spirit; and what about a future life? Why isn't there a course somewhere that tells us about this conflict between old ideas of religion and new things we learn in college?"

"I am desperately unhappy because I have lost my faith in God. For now that's gone what is the use of striving to be good? What is the use of our sense of duty? What is the use of life, anyway?"

"I am unhappy and do not want to go home on holidays, for we all go to church together and kneel and pray, so I feel like a hypocrite. Then when it is my turn to say grace at table I can hardly say it because it is so meaningless to me. But it would kill father if he knew how I feel. I think that is the worst of going away from home and changing so much—you

have to pretend to be just like you used to be when you visit at home."

Religion and evolution. Before we came to college we had an idea that the first chapter of Genesis was probably a schematic but essentially authentic account of the creation of the world and of man. At college we learned quite casually that the world was probably an accretion of nebular particles requiring untold years to come together; that all forms of matter and of living beings have been in a process of change, and adaptation to change, for other millions of years, finally, that man himself has come to his present stage of development through successive transformations of many grades of animal life. Our natural impression is that the Bible has given a false account of the Beginnings.

This is not the place to gather together the mass of data on those issues. If the student is really eager to get helpful facts, let him read those old books, Drummond's *Ascent of Man,* and Andrew D. White's *The Warfare Between Science and Theology.* There are other books of the same sort, later books, modern books.[1] but these two seem to meet the student on his own ground and at the very heart of his problem.

From the beginning of time old ideas have been intrenched in habits, customs, institutions, and emotions. A new idea about *anything* has to overcome tremendous resistance. No matter what the idea is about, somebody is sure to raise the hue and cry that the new idea is irreligious. The Quakers considered that ribbons in the hair were ungodly; and women visitors in short or collarless dresses are barred from the Vatican. Travel by steam cars was once thought an insult to Providence, and playing with cards a sin from the devil.

It is no wonder that a new theory of life should by some appear as a sacrilegious attempt to dispute the story of cre-

[1] A bibliography will be found at the end of the book for those who wish to read further and for the use of discussion groups.

ation. There are two groups of ideas which need to be correlated with our thinking in order to overcome the conflict between our preconceptions about divine *fiat* creation and creation by evolution.

On the one hand, we must have a very partial view and narrow interpretation of the Scripture even as it is written, if we can discover any fundamental conflicts. On the other hand, we have a narrow and partial view of the theory of evolution if we assume that it attempts to decide just how life arose, or how matter became imbued with spirit. Even the most materialistic scientist comes to a pause against the inscrutable mystery of force and life.

Within the years 1927-1929, the new physics has developed such a refined insight into the ultimate nature of "matter" that the old dualism between matter and mind (or spirit) seems to be dissolving. It once seemed impossible to conceive of particles of matter—atoms, molecules—as being composite, universes, and these (ions, photons, electrons) in turn being universes until the hard resisting table upon which I write, the mountain of stone, the life-giving sun, are alike reducible to an ultimate essence which loses any character of "matter" as we have been defining "matter."

What about the conflict between the traditions of the past, as set down in such ancient writings as the Bible, and modern scientific theories? Specifically, the theory of evolution cannot be said to contradict the Bible story, but, rather, to add meaning to it. No one who will read between the lines of the first chapter of Genesis and the story of the Flood can fail to be astonished at the brevity and clarity of the statement of evolution from chaos, through fishes, birds, and beasts, to human life; and at the scientific observation of ancient peoples who could deduce from the presence of fossil seashells on mountains the fact of a world under water. That German philosopher who insisted that "God put seashells on mountain tops to confound the wise," was less astute than the author of Genesis.

No real thinker can see any fundamental contradiction between the more important parts of tradition as found in the Bible, the Vedas, and in other early writings, and the findings of science of the present day. This is passing strange, and we stand with bared head before the wisdom of the ancients.

There are many specific contradictions. There are contradictions between most teaching of the past and modern thinking. If there were no contradiction, there would be no thought. If there were no contradiction, no necessity of going on and on from the present to the future, there would be no life.

But even when the student realizes that there never has been any fundamental contradiction between Genesis and evolution any more than between evolution and folklore, myths and history, he comes out of this study with a new attitude toward the Bible. He never again can think of the Bible as a simple, almost childishly direct story of events exactly as they took place. I wonder if we can realize how much the Bible itself is enriched by all the historical and scientific research of the modern era? From my vantage point of twenty-five years of "higher criticism," new translations, anthropology, and archæology, I wonder how a college student could have hesitated to give up his old idea of the Bible with this beautiful, wonderful new Bible waiting for his experience.

Man's descent. We self-centered human beings have a notion that we were a special climactic creation—God's last and greatest act. When we study history, biology, and evolution we have to recognize our kinship with all sentient life. We must perforce glimpse the tremendous laws which have operated throughout countless ages to produce gnat and prince, pigmy and genius. This is a large idea for the freshman mind, and the youngster passes with strain and difficulty from the easy idea of *fiat* creation of man to a conception of an ordered universe operating from the remotest conceivable time. Here, too, the ideas which come with "higher education" are so much greater than the old ideas which satisfy only because they were

never thought about, that none of us would return to the simple faith if we could.

The personal God. In our previous chapter we found that there can be no God except a personal God. We may discuss an impersonal Deity, an epiphenomenon, a God in heaven, the Divine Order, Nirvana, or other metaphysical concept to which we may give all the attributes of perfection from Love to Eternal Life. But this metaphysical concept has no real importance for our living.

You have all heard preachers who, assuming the function of vicegerents of God, declare to their congregations that God wants this, or will do that; that God is so and so and demands of us whatever the preacher has in his mind at the moment. And surely there is not one among you who has been so unreflective as not to be offended by these dogmatic poundings of the pulpit.

You alone know your God, and your God is the Lord of your soul. You find him in nature or in art or in little children; in the flower in the crannied wall, in the busy market place, in the whisper of a violin, or the smile of a blind beggar. God comes not always at command, but in the hour of need, in the still small voice, or in the breath of the wind, the burning bush of inspiration, or in the solving of a hard situation.

We can know only a personal God—what else there may be is the unknowable mystery of all ages. We cannot help knowing a personal God. He is in our lives whether or no. We may name him Yahveh, or Buddha, Intelligence, or the Good, the True and the Beautiful. But, however we name him, he lives within us or we would have perished. We may deny him, or blaspheme him, but in that act we affirm him.

Whence comes God into our hearts we know not. But his presence there is an ultimate fact, like life, and love, and the need to survive. What of that student who wanted somebody to "tell me what to believe"? How can I, an outsider, dictate to *your* heart?

Faith an intuition. We know God by intuition, we love, worship, fear, depend upon him as experience requires. God functions in our lives by virtue of the faith that is in us. We cannot prove much of anything by argument. Kant long ago showed the limitations of "pure reason." Only the "practical judgment," that is, the faith acquired by use in practical experience, can give a basis for any action. We have faith that the sun will rise to-morrow, and plan accordingly. We have faith that food will nourish us, and make every effort to supply ourselves with food. We have faith that there is air to breathe, and our diaphragm muscles keep up their rhythmic work. But we cannot *prove* that to-morrow's sun will rise, nor that air will not suddenly vanish from this earth. Such things never have happened, and the law of Uniformity of Nature gives us reason to believe (have faith) that they are not going to happen.

In the same way we "know" God. From the dawn of sentience God has come into our consciousness. He is the purposive element in our experience, the urge toward accomplishment, toward ideals, toward self-realization. Without God, daily living would be inexplicable, just as it has been unbearable for those boys and girls whose souls' eyes were blinded to the God within them, who have explored all knowledge and found nothing to live for!

Faith is often thought of as peculiarly religious. But this is not true. Faith is an attitude of trust in the uniformity of nature, derived from experience; faith is simply habit at work in all our acts and attitudes. Every breath we take implies faith in air to breathe. Every waking in the morning involves faith in the rise of another sun. Faith *is* living. You may think that you have "lost your faith in God." That is an impossibility. You may lose your belief in certain ideas about God, ideas around which you had built certain important habits of acting and feeling. It depends upon your own initiative, courage, powers of reconstruction to rebuild your life upon newer ideas.

You may supinely lie down and say, "My old ideas are gone, I've nothing left." That is a poor mind indeed which loses all in the richness of college life and can find nothing in its place. But faith, living in relation with the fundamental realities about us—that is present always. It may be a poor thing, it may scarcely be conscious, it may not be satisfying. We may by our living contravene the order of the universe and in this constant conflict suffer all the tortures of the damned. Our lives are in our hands, to construct in harmony, or in conflict.

Psychological principle of growth. The conflict of the present arises from the dangerous habit of building conduct around an "all-or-none" idea system. We adopt an idea, it then becomes a belief. We settle down to working with that belief as a basis for our conduct. Presently something changes that belief or contradicts it, and a whole set of habits has to go into the discard. This surgical operation of cutting habit-systems right out, root and all, is tremendously painful.

Suppose you had a belief in the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation. Perhaps you had, or thought you had, plenty of evidence for this belief. Having adopted this as part of your creed, you acted upon it. You were baptized, you argued for that ritual, you took a very clear position before many people. After a while, although you did not want to do so, you "changed your mind" because so many new ideas came in. Your difficulty arose from having to give up much you had heretofore acted out, also from the necessity of publicly retracting your stand of the past. The "law of inertia" operates most profoundly in human experience. A painful readjustment is required to go over from an old to a new idea. There is a sense of shame, of "inconsistency," a feeling of having failed a cause at the critical time. The whole psychology of habit is against growth.

Habit is age, it is settling down to repetition, it is holding on to what we have rather than going forth to conquer new

worlds. Habit bids us hold fast to the past, the old; we think we are lost if we give it up! Growth demands not that we discard the old, but that we remodel it. If students could only know that it is impossible to give up the past. Either it is made over, or it is reacted against so that it becomes a contrast against the present. But it is always an essential part of the pattern of life.

I am not trying to give an orthodox account of religious life. I have no scholastic "proofs" of the existence of God. Nothing is said of immortality, of the soul, or of eternal life in a hereafter. The individual solution for all of these problems *must* grow out of your own experience. But I have tried to give you a basis for setting out from the midst of this dark conflict of upheaval toward the light of a new and broader life, a life of growing ideas rather than of fixed beliefs; of broadening and deepening feelings rather than of primitive emotions.

What happens to my life if I decide that there is no God? Nothing at all except your own loss of some happy satisfactions which accompany a mind free from disturbing doubts and unsettled problems. *Deciding* what you are to think does make a difference in your religious experiences, but *nothing can prevent your having religious experiences.* Deciding that you cannot believe in God does not change the fact that you will pray, and stand in awe, and worship. You may call yourself an agnostic. We are all agnostics until we have worked out some satisfying hypotheses about our God, our own faith, our own prayers. You may even call yourself an atheist, which simply means that you have definitely and consciously rejected other people's definitions, and may even have stopped trying to make definitions of your own.

Whether you are a fundamentalist or a modernist is a matter of adjustment between your past habits, ideas, and prejudices, and your present ideas. There may be no conflict between past and present. If you have never had a religious conflict, either the past ideas and habit systems growing out of them were

elastic enough to incorporate new knowledge as it came to you, or your new ideas are not vivid and vital enough to disturb your habits, or you belong to that great majority who make no rational effort to unify their life of ideas and of habits and of emotions, but depend upon a few habits and ideas, started by some strong-minded director, to dominate them through life.

So many of you are worried about your uncertainty—fumbling in a fog is not pleasant. You would prefer to accept somebody's authoritative statement rather than to be so bewildered, without clues, or make any start on a reconstructive program.

There are churches which dictate your creed, you are not allowed to question or construct for yourself—merely to accept. And within that comfortable fold are thousands of persons weary of thinking or unwilling to think or voluntarily accepting the conclusions of authority.

If you cannot quite grow up and accept the responsibility for constructing your own spiritual salvation, it might be well to seek out a church home which forbids you to decide upon your own beliefs, whose educational program is specifically planned to fix habits of responsive living and eliminate critical thinking.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION AND CONDUCT

"If God has not set standards of right and wrong, how can we know what is right and wrong? I am majoring in philosophy and so am taking a course in the 'evolution of morals.' Our textbook, and, in fact, all the reference books explain that our ideas of right and wrong have developed just like our right-handedness, because of their usefulness in the struggle for existence. Now, it looks to me that this is a philosophy of 'every fellow for himself,' what somebody I read called 'expediency.'

"I used to worry a lot about it, but now I've just about adopted that idea myself."

Perhaps in the several chapters which have gone before not enough has been said about conduct, for the practical younger generation; as one boy said when we were discussing social duty in business, "What does it get you, anyway?"

The psychology of religious experience was analyzed in terms of ideas of God, and feelings (or emotions) of awe, reverence, love. Psychologists will naturally ask, "Does religion have nothing to do with conduct, then?"

You too are wondering what worship of God and faith in God should do for your life. Is not the *feeling* of right, the "sense of duty toward God," part of religious experience? And does not this feeling for right and wrong come to us from a divine source?

First of all comes the question, Is there an ultimate standard of right and wrong? Can you guide your behavior by some divinely inspired rules? If you fail to do this, will your punishment be guaranteed by a law of God, more inexorable

than natural laws of cause and effect which are blind, inadequate, which fall alike upon the just and the unjust?

As one boy put it, "I'm willing to take my chances in this world, but I'd give a whole lot to know what will happen in the next if I lie some and cheat a little." (He went on to assure me that he thought for the sake of the reward in this world—a higher grade in class—he would take the chances with the next one too.)

"If God has not set standards of right and wrong, how can we know what is right and wrong?" The Bible has been the standard of moral conduct among certain people ever since it was written. It was at first the only law, for the Hebrews. The priests were also the first lawgivers. It was natural and necessary that the priests should claim divine sanction for the laws. Thus the tradition that the Law was given by God directly to Moses on tablets of stone. Such a sanction guaranteed respect for the Law, and made it possible to provide penalties presumably sent down from heaven. So God sent the plagues upon the Egyptians, troubling the enemy of the chosen people. So the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Korah and all that appertained to him for his rebellion against Moses and Aaron—the lawgiver and the priest.

Until very recent days the Bible has been regarded as ultimate and final authority, because people believed it to be directly and completely inspired—dictated verbally by God himself. However, it has remained for modern times to make the more extravagant claims for verbal inspiration because it is only recently that the question has come up for exciting debate. It is always during conflict that extremists arise, and not until the late nineteenth century have claims of complete verbal inspiration been maintained.

Since most of us have been brought up under the domination of religious creeds growing out of the effort to make the Bible validate moral doctrines, we are face to face with a serious problem of readjustment when we come across the idea that

the Bible was not dictated directly by God on high, and the Law did not come ready carven on tables of stone on Mount Sinai.

I mentioned the boy whose argument for cheating in examination was my reason for writing this chapter on conduct. Somehow our ethical teachings have lost force with you young people. You have your own high idealism and moral code—a practical working code in your own daily lives. You read the newspapers and success magazines and from them derive the rules of your conduct, rather than from antiquated proverbs and old-fashioned Sunday-school lessons. The Victorian Era has gone, never to return, and with it the "good morals and gentle manners" of books which you scorn. These seem to you but artificial and insincere folkways.

The proverbs of old, which for a century we wrote so carefully in our copybooks, are unknown by you, or are known merely as literary antiques. And yet how carefully you scrutinize the saying "Honesty is the best policy," which we wrote so blindly! You question, Is policy the motive from which one should act? Does not the code of honor of all the ages require that one be honest—and disregard "policy"? Does not the proverb of the nineteenth century make for time-serving, whereas our motto should be "To thine own self be true"?

This is your deepest problem—if right is right only because it works here and now—well that's one thing; but if right is right because there is an eternal standard, an ideal, a law of conduct higher than our finite workaday world, then indeed is there significance in the evangelist's pleading—"Get right with God. To-morrow is too late!"

Perhaps in all the world of human questions this is the central problem. For the existence of God, the value of the Bible, our attitude toward religion and its institutions—the church, prayer, charity—are important for us because we *must* answer this question for daily living: How must I guide my conduct, and why?

In one of the papers handed to me by a class in English composition, the author had quoted Henly's poem "Invictus."

> "It matters not how strait the gate,
> How charged with punishment the scroll,
> I am the master of my fate,
> I am the captain of my soul."[1]

She added this comment: "Is that true? We have all heard this poem read with approval by our teacher; but if this is true, the saying of the Greek philosopher must also be true—'Man is the measure of all things.' That philosopher probably knew nothing about the Christian God, whose Son said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,' and who said at the last to his Father, 'Not my will, but thine, be done.' "

I think the thoughtful college girl typifies the youth of today, rising above the shorter-sighted pragmatism of ourselves who are already of yesterday. I think she tried to say that God, not man, is the ultimate will to which finite men who are "pure in heart" must eventually conform, and who, when they do so accept, shall "see God."

I live in a State capital, and have the complete disillusionment with State laws which comes from seeing them in process of manufacture. Laws may control us, but they cannot furnish a guide for our conduct as to right and wrong. Nor can we decide a moral issue by appealing to customs around us, nor to the most commonly accepted beliefs of our own friends, or community, or nation.

What, then, should we accept as our guide in helping us choose at the many partings of the way? For we all are forming habits with each choice. We select our direction, and then each choice, in little things almost more than in big things, helps us to go in that direction, whether we know it or not.

We have just said that we cannot decide what we shall do simply because "Everybody thinks it is all right."

[1] Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

Also we have learned during the past century that the principle of self-discipline, the principle of our Puritan Fathers, is not wholly dependable: "Do the hard thing for the good of your soul."

Nor can we always agree with the hedonist who bids us do that which will result in "the greatest happiness to the greatest number," if for no other reason than that we never can know what will in the long run give the greatest happiness.

Perhaps the same difficulty is involved in Kant's categorical imperative: "Act as if the maxim of our action were to become by our will a universal law of nature." But it is Kant who most clearly settles for us the ultimate basis of moral law which he has epitomized in this statement of the categorical imperative.

The moral law demands that all conduct be chosen so as to realize the highest good, and such realization implies higher, more universal law than the natural laws which we see operating around us.

The *origin* of our concept of a supreme good, of a higher order of the universe, is unknown and unknowable. The concepts of right and wrong, of good and bad, of law and order, have had a "natural history," both in the race and in our own experience. But we do not know how the race ever came to experience God, or Good, or Truth—we do not know how life itself came about first, and comes about every day around us. We watch the growth of plants, animals, human beings, but the secret of the *vital spark* is hidden. We watch the development of God and his worship in our own experience, and in the world about us, but whence comes the *divine spark* we know not. We watch the partial operations of Law as they are expressing themselves in happiness, righteousness, love, and all the other ideals of our conduct, but the source of idealism is an ultimate mystery.

As a conclusion to this perhaps too difficult discussion of the problem, the ethical basis of conduct, I can do no better

than to state as simply as I can the principles which appear to be the best results of our modern thinking.

There is a Force, a Spirit, a Being, God, in essence unknowable, but developing within the experience of every self-conscious individual.

There is a Law, a Supreme Goal, an onward and upward direction rather than a final goal, reconstructing within our own experience harmonious conduct, or being thwarted and contradicted by our own experience.

I like Trine's phrase "In tune with the Infinite." For, after all, we have to think our abstract thoughts in some concrete image. The old Greeks conceived the "harmony of the spheres," we try to "get right with God."

No one of us, however, can experience more than a "hint of the highest." You plead for someone to "tell me what is right. How can I know?" Right and wrong have come from a remote past—and are always changing their form. Just as religions have had their natural history in the race, so have the moral laws. Through æons of experimental living some ideals have held fast, have emerged as "golden rules" from the fiery testing furnace of human behavior.

Supreme above all other codes stands the New Testament. Other nations whose history is lost in the dim recesses of antiquity have also produced moral codes, and these too have the validity of tested experience. When we compare the principles so evolved in widely separated corners of the earth, we find most of them to be identical with the New Testament Ethics. Whether we seek in the philosophy of Confucius, or the regulations of Zoroaster, or the proverbs of Mohammed, we shall find certain moral laws common to all, but nowhere stated so dramatically, so free from the temporary dross of the person and the times as in the Sermon on the Mount.

Let us accept the Categorical Imperative, and "act as if the maxim of our action were to become by our will a universal law of nature." We may then choose "maxims" for our

action which will help us to apply to our concrete situations and everyday problems this generalized imperative. These maxims may well be chosen from the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew.

"If the Bible is not final authority upon moral law, will not everything become chaotic?" The answer is, of course, No. The race from its experience has evolved all the moral precepts, including the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule. Denying the verbatim inspiration of the Bible does not reduce the intrinsic value of the moral code as preserved in the Bible. On the other hand, the door is opened for constructive moral thinking.

There has been much despair because it was thought that inspired messages ceased with the apostles. But if we realize that inspiration is not a miraculous message from God to man, given once for all in a remote past, but great ways of meeting human situations which were worked out in the natural experiences of inspired geniuses, then we will be more ready to accept the leadership of moral thinkers of all times who have messages pertinent to our problems.

There is every reason to expect that new social conditions produce a consciousness of new problems, whose solutions will reinterpret the ideals of the race in a newer law of morality. But the moral ideals have steadily marched forward in one direction ever since the dawn of history began to leave records, and it is unthinkable that any major ideal of the past will become directly contradicted by any future interpretation of moral philosophers. For instance, the old laws about chastity have not been displaced by our newer freedom; they have only been deepened and strengthened and made more beautiful. It is impossible to believe that any new law will undo all the development of ten thousand years. Whatever has been good for ten thousand years and throughout those years has been improved and readjusted on higher levels has probably justified itself in experience; just as it must have grown

out of a hundred thousand years of experiment before it became written into the Ten Commandments.

Moral law has grown out of the most primitive needs of the group and, therefore, is more universal and more binding than any other human law. The words which express the race's ideas about morality are embedded in our deeper habits, so that it becomes hard to realize that *our* way of defining them may not be exactly true for anyone else.

Relativity of the moral law. But *good and bad* are relative terms. Once it was good to torture Galileo because he said the world was round. Once it was good to burn witches. Once it was bad to whistle on Sunday. Once it was bad to sail westward out of sight on the Atlantic Ocean. Even now, if you discuss what is good and what is bad, you will have great differences of opinion, you will hurt each other's feelings, you will get angry. Some of you would be disgraced if you were to say aloud what you really believe about lying, or stealing, or cheating, or gambling, or respect for parents, or any one of hundreds of moral problems. If others of you confessed the standards of good by which you are trying to live, your friends might scorn you as prigs. What you are all trying to do is to come to some conclusion about what is good and bad, right and wrong, true and false, in order that you may better make up your own minds as to the best ideas to have and to live by.

If you have followed the development of this chapter, you have been thinking in these steps:

Moral law, like religion, may find its final source in the nature of the universe, in God and his expression in law.

In human experience moral law, like religion, evolves and grows according to its functioning. Moral laws, like religious creeds and observances, have had a traceable historical development, from which the more vital, the fittest, have been winnowed to guide us in our present day.

So, in our individual experiences, moral precepts and ideals

will emerge, grow, develop toward some proximate goals, according as we make our moral choices, little and big.

"But," you say, "moral conduct is relative, and the ultimate goal is merely speculative, or hypothetical. The Supreme Good cannot then have any importance for us, or guide us. We are thrown back upon practical empirical standards. After all, a thing is true only because it works; it is good to cheat, if nobody knows and by cheating I am saved from failure. It is right to lie, if by lying I am saved from disgrace. Patriotism which demolishes a nation is praiseworthy if thereby our nation wins a war. A business success is fine, even though a competitor fails. This machine age is great, even though unemployed men are driven to desperate straits. 'Nothing succeeds like success,' and success in living is the only tangible goal toward which to direct our choices!"

Don't you think such a conclusion in itself points to a failure to grasp the essence of a pragmatic philosophy of morality? Just as God, though not comprehended in definitions, is always being defined by practice in racial and individual experience, so the moral law, though grounded in an uncomprehended universal order, is manifesting itself hour by hour in our living world and has become crystallized in efficacious maxims and in the inspired practice of the spiritual heroes of the centuries.

Such standards as the race calls virtues or ideals have justified themselves throughout history; they have been variously successful in specific situations, though they may often be unsuccessful, from our finite standards, in our own history. What will be the ultimate consequence in eternity to ourselves, personally, of our choices here and now—I do not know. Living in conformity with law and order as it manifests itself throughout our finite world gives satisfaction and procures a large measure of success. Choosing at every crossroad to travel in the path marked with the signboard of racial approval brings satisfaction, even though not always worldly success. Finally, studying all the complex bypaths and forking road-

ways in order to determine in which direction our own highest and most satisfying journey lies—this is hard; we part from our friends, often from the success so prized in practical life. Jesus died on the cross. Lincoln was shot by a fanatic. The pacifist was thrown into jail.

Education means nothing unless it helps one to "see the world steady, and see it whole"; unless it gives wise and constructive ways of choosing at the crossroads those paths which demonstrate "The ways of God to Man."

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

"My worst trouble is that when I go back home I am expected to go to church and Sunday school just as I used to do when I was little. Of course, it would break my mother's heart if she knew how I feel about church, besides making a dreadful scandal in town. It is not such a little town, either, but you know how it is when you have grown up in one place.

"I was converted when I was twelve, and was always a strong and outspoken Christian—president of the Y. P. S. C. E. my last year at home.

"Now that my religion takes a broader form and I see the religious strivings of everybody, even the non-Christian, I feel the hypocrisy of our smug little church, so when I have to go and sit through the sermon, I am resentful; it does me more harm than good."

"I read somewhere that 'if there were no God, the state would have to invent one'—to keep the people straight. I suppose now what I want to know is, do churches and religion in general just serve to make it possible for people to live together? Maybe, after all, Sunday observances grew up in evolution because people had to have rest to be healthy. Preachers got authority because it was necessary for the learned to *make* the ignorant do the right things, etc., etc."

What is religious living? What is the use of religion if it does not serve in daily living? If it does so serve, what does it do, and how does it perform the service?

May I be somewhat dogmatic in this chapter? Perhaps that will be all the more challenging to your thinking, even though my paragraphs may be more open to criticism.

Religion does serve to make our daily living more effective.

It orientates us toward the highest ideals and the fundamental laws which make for racial betterment and human welfare. Religion succeeds in performing this function adequately in our lives only in proportion as we live religious lives.

By religious living is meant living which gives expression to the religious emotions, living which is consciously responsive to the concept of relation to the Universal.[1] That is, in order to live religious lives you and I must definitely perform acts of love of God, worship of him, prayer to him. We must perform any other rite which is pregnant with meaning in our own experience. Some may fast, some sing hymns, some meditate in quiet communion with the stars, some partake of sacrament, some serve humbly their fellow men.

> "Who sweeps a room as by Thy laws
> Makes that and the action fine."

Consistent behavior which is guided by the highest ideals which we can learn or possess is an expression of religious life—"By their works ye shall know them." An ecstatic experience—prayer, contemplation, verbal professions—cannot suffice as evidence in our social life if it is contradicted by unworthy behavior.

Prayer. "What good is prayer, anyway?" my daughter said to me once. A fair enough question for a pragmatic youngster, to whom a mystical answer is no answer.

Psychologically, prayer has many values to us. Let us begin with a child's prayer. For some reason—a good, sound psychological reason—children's prayer-teaching has been centered at bedtime. This habit which mothers have followed for generations discovers for us the simplest, most evident function of prayer.

First, problems, events, and persons are brought into review

[1] "Our assurance of God," says Professor Arthur Stanley Eddington in his Swarthmore lecture, "is consciousness of a relation rather than flawless proof of his existence."

before consciousness. Our little world is presented as a whole and laid before God. It is our small way of relating ourselves to the Infinite and so composing our mind in this relation. Instinctively the mother, who would quiet her child and assure him of a good night's rest, teaches him to kneel, to fold his hands, to raise or close the eyes, to quiet the voice and breathing, to say rhythmic words which, no matter how little meaning they may have, are accompanied in the child's consciousness by all the overtones and distant echoes of the day's conflicts.

"And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

Our burden is "laid upon the Lord," and we are released, tensions are relaxed, health-giving rest is a consequence. In the long history of the race, prayer at bedtime has been life-giving, as it composed the problems of the day by resting the responsibility upon the Great Universe of which an individual is but a part.

Second, not only is our small world related to the Infinite and handed over to him for the night, but we ourselves, by reviewing our problems, set them into a perspective, and by this method of review, perspective, and release, they are "repressed" into the subconscious where the subtle activities continuing during sleep may re-work them and re-present them to us to-morrow, perhaps with a solution, or, at any rate, with a new energy and optimism. Our subconscious seems to be more directly in contact with the unknown forces which flow throughout the world during sleep than it is during our waking hours. Perhaps there is a positive relation to the Infinite which has reality and vitality beyond any dreams of the generations which knew nothing of present-day physics.

Third, as adulthood brings experiences to us, our prayer life enlarges. It is no longer a seasonal, bedtime activity; it may occur whenever a problem arises which finds us inadequate.

It is by no means seldom that prayers uttered in the depths of distress are "answered." Sometimes the subsequent event is so far removed from probability that it is thought to be "miraculous." The nearsighted explain such answers as "coincidence"; the realist can find many and various ways of accounting for "answers to prayer," as well as for unanswered prayers. The whole subject of prayer and its results in our lives is tremendously interesting.

Prayer is such an important and vital activity that it is universal in human experience. It may be used consciously and deliberately improved, thus contributing richness and material for growth. Or it may be neglected, and so fail to function within us. One who does not eat properly is stunted. One who does not exercise in the sunshine does not grow strong. Growth in spiritual life is no different from the physical growth which we witness every day—living the life which develops produces fine character; neglect of the methods of spiritual living results in dwarfed character.

Church. The church is the name of the social organization which has been formed to give concrete expression to our definitions and formulæ, and an opportunity for religious practices which have their greatest value in group performance.

Many religious experiences are enhanced in the group; many religious experiences cannot occur to one alone. As our moral life is necessarily a social life, so much of our best religious life is shared life.

The church has been split into many denominations, and these are split into as many individuals as there are church members, and sometimes church membership and church attendance are destructive of religious experience. A building which is called a church may be merely a hall. An attendance which purports to be a congregation may not be having a religious experience at all. The occasion may be pleasant enough; indeed, the time may be spent in business necessary to the enterprise, but that is no guarantee of its religious character.

In fact, I believe that only a very small part of our church activities and our church as an institution have any relation whatever to the development of religious experience.

That does not mean that there should be no interests in the church except religious experience—worship. Some of the church's activities have a moral aspect of the highest importance. If our highest duty is toward our God, only lesser in importance, and necessary for full relation with the Divine, is our duty to our fellow man. Consequently, we cannot solve our problem of relation to the church merely by the test question, "Do I have important religious growth in connection with the church and my activities in it?"

The problems of my relation to church membership, church attendance, and activities in the church are social problems, practical problems, and, most significant of all, problems of fundamental relations to my fellow men as participants in the Universal Life.

Shall I go to church to-day? A choice is to be made. On the one hand: my mother wants me to go; not only will she be unhappy, but also she will think I have seriously failed in my duty if I do not go; my friends will judge that I have no religion if I do not go; some of them will be hurt, some made weaker, some will be alienated. I shall be setting myself seriously apart from the social group, will be in conflict, will peril my own full happiness and satisfactory relationship. That is one aspect of my problem. Is there a higher duty to myself not to go?

I shall suppose, on the other hand, two possible cases:

First, where there does seem to be a higher motive, which makes it my duty to accept this alienation and not go to church. Suppose my church has definitely taken a stand upon a question which for me is of the utmost significance, and I cannot conscientiously accept this even though I am cut off from all my social group. Yesterday, perhaps, it was decided not to admit to membership a Negro family, simply on the basis of color. I

cannot remain with a religious organization which is willing to make a decision of that kind—*its* choice of conduct is one which I cannot accept. So I can no longer be one with that group.

Or, I shall describe a situation in which my duty obviously lies in subjugating my own immediate desires and accepting some inner dissatisfaction for the sake of the social group. The preacher may not inspire me, the congregation may not interest me, but a self-centered religion of my own would damage the social group in which I might become an educative and constructive influence.

I should go to church and play such part as I can, having had advantages and opportunities which I should share with my neighbors.

Too often our sense of superiority over a less advanced community forms the lowest motive for conduct, though it disguises itself and is rationalized as a superlative motive.

You have heard arguments, and all of them in favor of church membership. Last winter I heard a group of young people—a sorority—arguing the matter from their point of view. Perhaps some of you young people will catch a familiar ring in the conversation.

Mary Burke had started the debate by asking Eve to come with her to a mission class in the Italian Quarter. Eve had answered: "First, I don't want to go anywhere this cold day. Then, I have plenty of interesting things to do here. If I went anywhere, it would be for good music and a good sermon, *not* to a Wop Sunday-school—why, aren't they all Catholics, anyway, and doesn't their priest look after them?—but seriously, I haven't time for church to-day."

Mary started to explain that one needed to perform Christian service for the good of one's soul, but had not proceeded very far when Josephine broke in with the exclamation: "What good is church anyhow! I used to belong, but I wouldn't belong to a church now for anything."

Mary said, " 'He that is not with me is against me,' and surely, Joe, you are not against Christ?"

"That's a very old-fashioned evangelistic speech, Mary. Nobody believes you can separate the sheep from the goats any more that way."

"I know, Joe, that a dogmatic statement like that must be explained. I'm only trying to say that we either take an attitude of accepting and working with the church and all the fine things it does; or we are likely to take an antagonistic attitude even if we think we are not doing so, and work against the church and the community ideals it tries to realize. I don't suppose one really has to be antagonistic—sometimes it only seems to others to work out that way."

"But I know good people, who are a fine influence for good, who do not belong to the church, and who never work against it."

"Perhaps it is true that one does not have to be a church member actually, in order to do good and be good, but certainly, if churches could be ideal and provide for spiritual growth, we would lose our greatest opportunity for character development if we did not co-operate in that form of social life."

One of the other girls rallied to Mary's defense by saying that for her part she thought it was everyone's duty to join with whatever community group was doing the kind of work which seemed the very best, regardless of denomination. This brought a spirited debate as to whether one should look for personal spiritual growth, or opportunity to perform the greatest social service—Mary's mission school versus a fine sermon and music.

Here the question will be left, for no one can decide for another.

CHAPTER VII

THE ADJUSTMENT OF PERSONALITY: PROBLEMS OF MOOD

We older people have our ups and downs, our "cross days," and blue Mondays—times when our children keep quiet and out of the way, when the stenographer postpones all the questions waiting for an answer, when even the office boy backs out of the office, cutting his message to the briefest statement.

We elders justify our moodiness with the consideration that we are carrying the world upon our shoulders. We are running all its business, its goodness, and its wickedness. We have such tremendous secret worries as neither child, nor stenographer, nor office boy could ever imagine! It is *we* who are responsible for armies and navies, for vast machineries, for government, and education, and valorous enterprises. The children are being borne along by us, the stenographer has only to draw her pay, the office boy—what cares has he?

I think that we who are old have completely forgotten the abysses of despair, the mountaintops of joy, which are characteristic of the 'teen age. Nobody understands, or appreciates, or makes allowance for the moods of the adolescent. He does not understand them himself, he is inordinately shy and would far rather be dead and buried than betray his inner turmoil; either his delirium of happiness (he recognizes the causes to be trivial or funny in the unsympathetic eyes of an adult), or his depths of gloom, more sacred and secret than the greatest adult tragedies. Sometimes I think that old people believe that youth's sorrows are trivial, or are non-existing. Because we cannot see any reason for adolescent moods, we

cannot believe that there are such things—and if there are, they are not important.

But you girls and boys who have answered my questions, to whom I have talked, who have written to me, you are feeling more deeply than any other human beings in the universe. The greatest tragedies of love, and jealousy, and hate, and self-sacrifice, are going on among you. You are the ones who come to high schools and colleges hoping to learn to balance your lives, to realize dreams of service which will give satisfaction, to secure techniques of living with people which will prevent the thousand social mistakes so constantly menacing your happiness and alienating your friends. You do not always realize that the key to your self-control and adjustment lies in the daily assignments in your psychology course.

For those of you who are not students there are books in your public library which will enable you to develop for yourselves a philosophy of life and an understanding of yourselves. The understanding will give you self-control, and the self-control will be the balance you need for control over situations as they arise.

> "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is man."

"My biggest problem, I believe, is my own moodiness. Most people think of me as an even-tempered, pleasant, quiet sort of person, while really I am anything but these. Really I have a very quick temper, am often impatient, but the worst thing is that I change moods so quickly. I may be vivacious one minute, then quiet the next; dreaming, then noisy; happy, then in the depths. And I am troubled because I feel like a hypocrite —only I can't help it. I don't know how to be stable, or which is the real me. I try to *seem* sunny and cheerful, even when I am in the depths. But I feel as if I were playing a part, and hiding my faulty self."

"The greatest problem I have is understanding or finding myself. I am inclined to be very moody—one time very joy-

ful and then very low—which, I have come to the conclusion, is the reason for my trouble. There are times that I want to be outside—but not a spring-fever type—and away from every one, especially girls, for I can't stand them. At these times I am no good whatsoever in what I am doing. I grow very downhearted and dislike everything that is holding me back." (Girl.)

"I wish I knew whether what I am going to tell about is a fault of mine, or is it common in most people. I believe it is partly habit, but there is, or has been, some definite cause of it, perhaps.

"I am very many times just overcome, if I may use the word, with a *terrible* moodiness. It can come very suddenly, maybe while listening to music, or while eating. When once I begin to think about the *why,* or what will happen in life, I cannot be very happy, although I have a lovely father (my mother is dead), and I am very happy at home."

"There are many problems facing me at this age, of course, but I feel that the main one is difficulty in getting a direct, *unified* trend of volition and reasoning; that is, it is sometimes difficult to make a decision, usually because of fear of being misunderstood or of being wrong. Perhaps it's merely a question of having been a 'rubber stamp "yes" man.' I feel I am getting away from that now, although there's a long, twisting trail, paved with 'problematic situations' which must be covered before I can make myself believe that I've trained my volitional responses to occur as I wish them to. I don't want to be a 'yes man' who acquiesces in everything. No one does."

"My problem is concerned with the strengthening of a complicated character. My will is strong, but I have been subjected to the wills of others so many times that I am at a loss in solving problems of life. When presented with a problem I cannot decide one way or another. I feel the need of having somebody to tell me what to do."

"Who am I?" The problems which we have chosen to quote range all the way from the normal changes in mood of a sensitive, introspective person to mental experiences needing

the careful supervision of a psychologist versed in mental hygiene.

It is one of the most significant moments of adolescence—that of full self-consciousness. The little child is *un*-selfconscious. The youth is slowly awakening. There comes a time at last when the ego emerges as an individual, a separate, responsible *person*—and for days, weeks, possibly months and years, the sensitive self-conscious young man or woman is face to face with the isolation of the ego.

Not all people are equally susceptible to the problems of mood. In some this aspect of mental development is telescoped into a brief period. The introvert suffers most. It is he who will understand the problem. The extrovert may find friends who understand, and adjustment is easy. To many who are about to read this chapter there is no problem—and it will be meaningless. To you I say, pass it by on the other side. It is not written for you, but for those others who are now and again mired in the blackness of despond, or whose social satisfactions are ruined because inexplicable moods rise up and dominate them.

Seabury, in his book, *Growing Into Life,* says:

"This is a strange and significant fact, which we too often forget—this phenomenon that each of us is the axis of his world. Time and space revolve around us and we can only measure its whirling variations from within. Other men report to us what they have seen and touched. But they in turn have sensed their days from their own concentric position.

"Hence life will always be a riddle; I cannot go into your mind and feel as you feel. You cannot know experience as it has burned itself into my spirit. We must each interpret the other's drama.

"Much confusion results in men's attitudes and beliefs because they forget this law of embodiment. We hear people talking as if they were able to stride into the privacy of another individual and measure his intentions with a scale. 'My daugh-

ter is selfish. She likes to make trouble for me.' 'My boy is sinful.' "[1]

With our extreme absorption in our own ego it is difficult to realize that our moods, our hopes, our conflicts, our problems are universal, that anyone who thinks and feels at all is ground through the same sort of mill as we are. It is hard to believe that we are not unique thinkers in a thoughtless world. We do not know that our own minds and moods are working in the normal way in which all minds and moods work.

Let us at once, then, accept as a basis for our discussion this fundamental fact of psychology, that all minds work about alike in obeying great laws of thinking and inquiring.

Together let us accept the further fact which is so self-evident as to give us a sense of utter *alone-ness,* namely, that each of us as a person is wholly shut out from the actual experience of another person. We are shut into our own ego shell forever. No one can come in, we cannot get out. Wordsworth said of Milton, "Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." Each soul in this world of persons is like a star and dwells apart, infinitely removed from every other soul.

Out of this absolute isolation of personality appear the tragic problems of our experience. Our minds evolve their living experiences, we are conscious of happiness, of light, of beauty, of power, of each other. But never in any mortal life can another actually enter into our personality, nor can we participate in any real sense in the personality even of our dearest and closest friend.

There is presented to each one of us a tremendous problem, the lonely personality sitting back in the dim recesses of our consciousness; the deeds, the thoughts, the moods, the joys, and loves, and desires ever-shifting in the luminous kaleidoscope of our experience.

Who am I? What am I? What sort of person am I to myself? To my best friends? What am I like as a passing

[1] Reprinted by permission of Horace Liveright, publisher.

thought to a casual observer? What power have I to be, or to become, to attain my dream of personality? Am I each of the conflicting personalities which go on within me? Or have I an engine which drives these conflicting elements as a great train of working units? There is within me the beast and the ascetic; the philosopher and the good fellow; the practical man and the dreamer; the worker and the idler; the gay blade and the sad melancholic. Sometimes one feels the joy of life: "Hence, loathed melancholy!" Again, a mood of deep despair:

> "Hence, vain deluding joys,
> The brood of Folly, without father bred."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
> Hail, divinest Melancholy."

William James' great book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* has a valuable chapter called "The Divided Self, and the Process of Its Unification." Here the reader will find described many cases which will comfort him with the reflection that other great souls have been in the same situation as he. Here too the reader will find psychological explanations which will be helpful, and will supplement the brief notes in this chapter.

One of the most mysterious and baffling of our personality problems is that of mood. We all know that there are in the world persons who become wise, efficient, sane; or difficult, useless, insane, depending upon their ability to control their moods.

Causes of mood. Probably physical causes are involved in the production of mood. The emotions are focal points of more general conscious tones. Since emotions and moods are aspects of the same physiological processes, let us discuss the emotions, which have been studied more carefully by the psychologist.

Emotions are accompanied by rapid heart beat, by tendencies to some action or toward certain types of behavior; often there is rapid breathing, blushing or pallor, sometimes vaguer stomach, heart, and abdominal feelings; there may be tears, or a dry mouth (as in acute worry, embarrassment, fear), loss of appetite, a desire to shout, laugh, sing.

Some physiologists and many psychologists follow W. B. Cannon in his hypothesis, based upon interesting experimental research, that the emotions are invariably accompanied by secretions from the adrenal gland. Cannon shows that this gland pours adrenalin into the blood during any state of nervous excitement. The effects of adrenalin, carried by the blood to all parts of the body, are just those which occur during an emotion, and may be explained from the standpoint of their utility in preserving the animal's life in times of stress and strain. Darwin showed how useful for survival are the muscular activities which we call the expressions of the emotion. Cannon shows the usefulness of the inner physiological changes which accompany the emotion.[2]

Although emotions are temporary and moods prolonged, still we attribute the mood to the emotion-producing event out of which the mood has grown. An embarrassing occurrence leaves a mood of depression. A disappointment, even though slight, gives one a "spell of the blues." A seemingly trivial joy may produce a mood of elation.

No one has made any headway in working out the physiology of moods. But without doubt there is some similarity between the physiology of emotion and the physiology of moods, since

[2] For those of you who may be interested in reading about the physiology of the emotions, see Myerson, F., *The Foundations of Personality* (pp. 11-16). Pierce, F., *Mobilizing the Mid-Brain* (Chap. IV). Cannon, W. B., *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear, and Rage.* Berman, L., *The Glands Regulating Personality.*

One must not accept these writers completely and at their face value. There has been much debate about the exactness of the experimental techniques employed by the investigators. However, recent researches carried on by the physiologists who were reluctant to accept the earlier findings tend toward verification.

we so often think of a mood as having arisen in an emotional episode.

Moods are often attributed to even more general physical causes. The dyspeptic is notoriously pessimistic. One who has not had a good night's rest is "grouchy," and ill health makes one "blue" or ill-tempered. On the other hand, a good meal and a happy frame of mind go together. Music leads to soothing reflections, while sunshine and a brisk wind blowing upon the cheek call out a mood of exhilaration and gayety.

None of these causes is absolute. They are not dependable. One can only court gayety by going into sunshine and wind, but not insure it, nor can one be sure of peaceful feelings while smoking a pipe. Moreover, the moods slip over into each other without apparent rime or reason.

The rhythm of mood. Did you ever take a long motor ride across a rolling country where the roads run due north and south, east and west, mile after mile and hour after hour? You slide down a long, long hill, and up, up to the crest of the next hill. You put your car into second gear and ease it down a steep grade to a river valley, knowing full well that you must come up to the same level again on the other side of the bridge. There is never a hilltop but there is a corresponding valley. The great snow-capped peaks of mountains imply abysses and cavernous depths.

Whatever the *cause* of the moods, they are the normal ups and downs of life. The most hapless, drab fate imaginable would be a dead level of feeling. The excitement of exhilaration could not last long—that way lies mania. The sad dejection of gloom must not remain—that way lies melancholia.

There are long, rolling stretches of life, ups and downs, with an occasional steep grade or high point from which to survey life. Youth, the college years, explore the mountains of life. Dizzy heights, despairing abysses—probably going along with the erratic functioning of the ductless glands. Mountaintops are no less glorious and wonderful because they are made

possible by the body which casts our destiny. Valley depths are more bearable when they are recognized as the logical condition for mountains, and when the laws of rhythmic function of the body promise a return up the slope in due time. It is only when we rationalize our despair as "caused" by some external event rather than by the normal, if erratic, functioning of our glands, and blame ourselves or the event for the mood that we begin to worry over the problem.

Why are we moody? Because we have a rich and sensitive nature, a keenness for the heights and depths of life, an awareness of subtle changes, inner and outer.

> "Rather I prize the doubt
> Low minds exist without,
> Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark."

"One thing I wonder about most frequently is whether one can combine the two sorts of individuals—the conscientious, helpful, earnest sort and the light-hearted, amusing sort. It seems that those who are useful are at the same time dull 'flat tires,' whereas those who are good company make things hard for the rest of the world. If one can't be both, which is the best? The obvious answer is the former, but one who has been that sort of a person sometimes wonders how worth while it is."

Who am I? Each one of us is a vast complex of conflicting desires, ambitions, impulses, loves, hates. When we are young these rattle around in our experience right merrily; now one impulse gets us into one situation, and a conflicting impulse gets us into another, so that we often find ourselves in quite a mess.

Ethel and Jack are walking by the lake, the time is spring, they have been "dating" all year, and together without many words but with perfect understanding love's old story is whispered. Jack is, of course, the only man in the world for Ethel, and Ethel is Jack's whole life on earth and hope for

heaven. Eight hours later, under the spell of spring, of a dreamy waltz and a moonlit porch, of soft eyes and the ever-ready feeling of youth, Ethel may be in the arms of Jerry, and Jack may be whispering the sweetest words in the world to Kate. It is just such complications as these which startle young people to an insight into their own natures—a look-in which troubles, bewilders, frightens them.

To-day Esther is sure she wants to dedicate her life to the service of humanity; to-morrow she is fired with ambition to become a movie star.

Walter has determined upon an engineering profession and enters the engineering course. But he no sooner commits himself than he discovers a tremendous interest in medicine; or it seems that his life would be cast in barren places if he cannot become a college teacher.

How often does one perforce say complimentary things to a person despised, and unkind things to a dearly beloved? And how often does one explain in deepest chagrin, "What makes me do it? *Why* can't I be true to myself?"

Who is myself? "I am the heir of all the ages," and, forsooth, am therefore *many* persons. This is the preciousness of youth. Here is the great opportunity. Herein really lies the possibility of advance, of striking into a new personality, better, finer, higher than previous levels. We know not who we are because we may be so many people, and some one of them, or a combination, will be our "best self."

What an opportunity, if we but knew it, are these glimpses of "other selves," of greater things! If we could but wake up to the offering, to the bountiful spread of personalities within us, before "the light of common day" fixes us into drab, temporizing, time-serving persons! We catch glimpses of all the personalities we may become—and often act out several conflicting personalities so that we become involved in external complications to match our inner conflicts.

We have the impulse to be friendly to all, unchecked by

experience and judgment. But at the same time one of our selves dislikes a certain person very much. Seeing the person we are rude and cruel, we create a difficult social situation for all around because the personality who dislikes this person is in charge within us. In the privacy of later reflection, the self with a high ideal of social conduct takes charge, and we suffer bitterly from the behavior of a stupider self.

Out of these conflicts must come a refinement, a sincerity based upon decisions, choices, reasonings, ideals. A unified self can never be wholly achieved; that would be death, annihilation of consciousness. But a process of unifying the self progressively by resolutely seeking to act upon the best ideals, and to learn by unhappy "mistakes," evolves an integrated personality.

Defects of personality. It is very easy to fail in this supreme human endeavor—the development of the finest possible personality. (1) When faced with conflicting desires or impulses, one may *follow the line of least resistance.* This does not always lead downward either, but is none the less fatal to strength of character.

One may be a "good scout," a fine, kind fellow, by following the lines of least resistance. It is nearly always easier to be friendly to all than to select friends carefully, and to manage the situation of rejecting an undesirable friendship with wisdom, poise, and strength of will. Friendships chosen build up character; friendships not chosen may not.

(2) When faced with conflicting desires or impulses, one may *run away from the issue.* This is a common but tragic occurrence. There are all sorts of ways of avoiding a fight to the finish in a conflict. Perhaps the most common is "passing the buck," that is, getting someone else to shoulder the responsibility and tell you what to do. That is the infant in all of us. In certain forms this is even called an "infantile complex," when an adult depends upon another person for his authority in meeting vital issues.

Doctor Overstreet calls the first chapter of his book, *About Ourselves,* "Backward, Turn Backward." Summing it up he says: "And so, grown-up life, we note, often has a tendency to drop back to its earlier, less adequate stages. Usually, those who drop back do so because they are unable at the moment to face the grown-up situation in a really grown-up way" (p. 34).[3]

It is sane and wise to ask advice in important matters, even sometimes to take it against our own wishes, if we are sure our adviser is more unprejudiced and better able to reach a conclusion than we ourselves in that particular situation. But this is a rare, an exceptional situation. In all ordinary affairs as a habit of life each person should make his decisions for himself, from the time he is old enough to reason at all.

Home training does not always foster this ability. The idea of obedience, of respect for the authority of age and experience, ideals of courtesy and deference to others, submergence of self under a mistaken theory of unselfishness, have all contrived to deprive the child of self-reliance. Character has been emasculated to promote a harmonious society governed by militaristic discipline or ancestor worship.

As a consequence of this home and school discipline, and of living in an atmosphere permeated by the ideals of servility, of submission, of obedience, it is a difficult task for the young man to choose his life, for the young woman to step beyond the moment and organize her conduct in terms of the years. So we see these young people getting somebody else to make up their minds for them.

In society at large most of us accept the dictum of the party boss, of the fashion plate, of the newspaper headline. Our inner self tells us not to vote for *X* because he is crooked, but when the headline says "Step up to the polls, vote for *X*," we go automatically under control of habit—accepting decisions from others. In our private lives we need to ask someone to

[3] Reprinted by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, publishers.

help us buy our clothes, to decide upon our courses in college, to select our beliefs about religion or football games or the Negro. We do not believe in prayer because it is not in fashion at the fraternity house; we shout ourselves hoarse at a football game in which we have no interest; we cut the Negro classmate though we are ashamed and chagrined that social usage makes it "necessary."

(3) When faced with a conflict between things that we want to do, we may *avoid the issue by some subterfuge*. We refuse to face the conflict, and we substitute something else.

Henry Meyers wanted to be popular. He wanted to be bid for a fraternity. But he was a Jew. He was snubbed by the "best people." Because of his race he could not be rushed for one of the fraternities he admired. But he was still determined to be noticed, to have people talk to him, to make himself a figure on the campus.

First he tried to ingratiate himself into the inner councils of the boys he admired, and to "date" the girls whose favor he craved. This was a direct attempt to face the situation as such and to make the adjustment he desired. But he failed, and he took his failure bitterly. Now, instead of facing the situation squarely, and working out some other way of "making good" in college, he became resentful. He became loud in his talk and in his clothing. He adopted strange views on life which gave him prominence, not as a sincere thinker, but as a "queer character." He insulted the boys, and was rude to the girls. This was a bad adjustment to a difficult situation.

Nearly all the hard, unsocial, or antisocial people have created for themselves their character in response to a conflict with situations which they did not know how to manage otherwise. Often this difficulty finds its beginning in some apparently trivial situation and "spreads" over life—it becomes the character.

If you are such a one, you will probably need help in overcoming it, the help of a wise friend to whom you can tell all; of

a psychiatrist perhaps; of a personnel service in high school or college. Do you wish you were kind, more courteous, more social? Do you regret your impulse to bluster and swagger, to bitter invective which you do not mean, to critical sarcasm—the impulse that controls you against a deeper, truer self which cannot get expression? Have you a submerged fear which forces you to bully people as a bluff to cover that fear? Have you a desire for friends, but have been once hurt, so that you shun people now, and are a recluse?

These are merely subterfuges by means of which you are trying to hide away from the real issue. Face yourself squarely, the desires within you which conflict with the external situation, and try once more to work out a better adjustment, a mode of behavior more satisfactory—nearer to your ideal.

The worth of the person. At the beginning of the chapter we described the utter isolation of each person—his complete separation from first-hand experience of any other person. And most of this chapter has been concerned with the inner experience as it appears in consciousness, because, after all, *my* experience is of final authentic interest; no other has any importance at all except as he enters into my own experience—*my* friend, *my* brother, *my* lover.

Our moods rise to the heights and fall to the depths, torturing while they enrich life. Our ideals within us contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil, until we cry in the depths of despair: "Who am I? Am I beast or am I archangel?"

We study our defects and our assets, we conquer our vices and cultivate our virtues. But all this time we are asking: "To what end? Is all this effort worth while? Am *I* worth while? And to whom?"

After all, a person has no meaning merely as an isolated person. The presence of others in the world as part of his experience is the most important of all facts of life—far more

important than what is happening to the "soul which dwells apart."

Values are social terms; they have significance only in a social world. Even pain, brute physical pain, is mitigated by sympathy or increased by the lack of sympathy. Love, joy, are accompanied by and even dependent upon physical "expressions," movements of communication. The deepest impulses of our personality are socially conditioned.

How, then, can one reconcile a social and an egotistical self? Neither has meaning without the other in the deeper psychological sense. But in the factual life of every day, people are for practical purposes rather easily classified into those whose value-sense is social (the *un*selfish), and those whose value-sense is unsocial (the selfish). The books on ethics have been divided in their analysis of human conduct and in their presentation of ideals. There are those who have maintained that Christian ethics is essentially social, altruistic, unselfish, long-suffering. "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

The hedonists, notably John Stuart Mill, pointed out that man could not help but act in a way which furnished the greatest satisfaction to himself. Even turning the other cheek was done for the satisfaction of living up to his idea of right.

Perhaps none of us will ever discover the perfect adjustment between the individual's own private sense of value and the larger appreciation of social value. And even if we could formulate a perfect ideal, we would constantly deviate in our actions. There, again, the final ideal must be constructed out of our best philosophic thinking.

Self-forgetfulness may easily result in the worst social action. An example is the mother who gives up all for her children and allows them to form habits of selfishness, so that they expect self-sacrifice from her and later from their wives, husbands, and friends. No one can honor that humility which causes us

to be despised and ignored; that self-denial which weakens effectiveness; that unselfishness which involves others who lose more than we who involve them.

"No man lives to himself alone," and our every act, thought, inner impulse has its root in consciousness of the world about us, and sends its shoots up into that world. It is a difficult problem to make the nice adjustment between effective unselfishness and altruistic selfishness.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

"I HAVE always had what I believe is commonly called an inferiority complex. It is awfully hard for me to come out of my reserve and meet people. I seem to feel that I'm not as good as my neighbors."

"The problem which troubles me the most is that of subduing an inferiority complex which I must have acquired during my grammar- and high-school days. I come from a wealthy suburban town, and since my parents were not wealthy this reflection was cast upon me in grammar school while associating with children of these wealthy people. As I was somewhat of an athlete, and more or less pugnacious, I would often encounter some of these aristocratic snobs during various enterprises, and I would deal with them accordingly. Because of this I was always more or less a social outcast in this company. This problem is still with me."

"A lack of confidence in my own abilities seems to be one of my incurable faults; I can't even imagine from what cause this has come about; perhaps if I did know I might be better able to gain a little confidence in myself."

"I lack confidence in myself and am actually afraid to try any job in the summer. My independence must be developed in some way before I take any particular position. How do you develop it?

"Everything is done for me at home. The only problems I have had to solve have been trifling school problems."

"My greatest trouble is that of depending on other people. I think one reason for this is that I am the youngest member of my family and have been spoiled. If I ever try to do any-

thing, there is always someone to come along and do it for me. It is natural, though, for the youngest of the family to be shielded from all hardships."

"This matter of adjustment to a social environment and to the people contained therein has always been a serious one. Endowed, *ab origine,* with an almost phenomenal shyness, it has always been very difficult for me to talk with people. I lack any sort of self-confidence, am acutely sensitive to any unfavorable comment or even atmospheric reaction. In particular I find women difficult. I cannot for the life of me carry on what purports to be an intelligent conversation with any woman under thirty."

"Another problem of mine is how to meet people. When among strangers I draw into a shell, as it were, and am not my real self. I must learn to meet strangers as my future work depends on being a friend to all."

We are under great obligation to the psychoanalysts for giving us the term "inferiority complex." When we grow up into adults and have to go out and meet the world we become acutely aware of ourselves in contrast to others—usually of our defects, our faults, our differences—and any personal difference from other people is by a curious rule of human consciousness a matter for embarrassment. In order not to suffer for our own peculiarities we must either overcome them, or hide them, or rationalize them.

Origin of feelings of inferiority. Most persons upon reflecting can give some account of how their "inferiority complex" seems to have arisen. Some of the students whose letters have been quoted gave brief accounts or hints of what they believe to be the source of their trouble. More careful study would bring out more clearly the effects of the conditions described, and would bring to light many other probable contributing factors.

There is enough in the lives of every one of us to give us an almost unendurable sense of inferiority—we are being con-

stantly pricked, criticized, abused. We fail in many enterprises by the outcome of which we judge our own ability. Others forge ahead of us in daily races and in the daily competitions. A curt policeman can make us want to crawl into a knothole, and the stare of a perfect stranger causes us to doubt our taste in neckties or blush over a last season's hat.

This sensitiveness to the social judgment is part and parcel of human nature. Without it the race could never have developed a social group. People can live together in group life only by being compelled to give up their individual peculiarities—a thing they never would do if they were not made to suffer because of possessing them. Sensitiveness to the opinion of others, embarrassment at any conspicuous departure from the common herd, self-consciousness while undergoing inspection are a normal part of human consciousness.

It is easy for the early home environment to increase sensitiveness and to develop inferiority feelings. The school of hard knocks is always open for pupils, and too often the result upon the pupils' lives is left entirely to chance.

The study of serious cases of maladjustment makes it almost certain that the cause of most complexes lies far back in early childhood. It is the home which is responsible for our attitudes and defects and difficulties as well as for our strength and education and high ideals. If we know that our character defects lie in our past history, and if knowing the cause helps to overcome the difficulty, we may ourselves pursue a psychoanalysis which will prove illuminating.

Too often the "good" little child is the shy, reserved child who is developing a feeling of inferiority. When he is noticed at all it may be with a word of praise, but so seldom is he noticed! The aggressive brother or sister who is always getting into trouble is also getting the rewards of aggressiveness, including most of the family attention, and the excitement of his misdeeds.

Were you the good child at home? Did you, also, rather

despise yourself because you could not quite venture on the wicked career which was very bad, nevertheless beyond your capacities? Did you discount the very virtues for which you were extolled and sometimes think that heaven would be well lost for a good round chance to participate in deviltry?

Perhaps I have stated the case rather strongly for you. I have in reality brought together the gist of a long confidential interview which I had with a brilliant, but not daring, young student. He was working out a technique to "make good"—that is, to overcome some of his inferiority. This young man, working for his doctor's degree, decided he must learn to be rough, to smoke black cigars, to swear. All this he told me at length while he handled his black cigar. It was told of him that summer, that when he became very furious at his golf stick, when he missed the ball stroke after stroke, he would stamp his foot and say words under his breath. The tone and facial expression were fierce—the words were "Tut! tut!" He consciously and successfully overcame his feeling of inferiority, and now he is a distinguished college professor. And, I may add, he accomplished this without finding it necessary to have recourse to immorality or any black deeds. His determination to express his own desire for freedom turned the trick.

The aggressive child who thinks not of himself but of what he wants, or is about to do, is the one always in trouble. He too may be handled badly at home or in school, by people who call him bad, who try to "discipline" him rather than train him. He too may come out of his stormy childhood with the scars of many battles which he has lost, the memory of many situations which have "diminished his ego," when he has felt guilt, shame, defeat. Some of this is good discipline. Most of it is a serious handicap for future efficiency.

Some children meet the slings and arrows of fortune by developing fine courage, self-possession, and resistance. Others slink away, or flinch at every rebuff, or "draw into a shell" to

avoid the conflict. Still others develop a bluff; they pretend superiority; they evolve a protective armor of defiance.

If they have failed to make good adjustments, they find themselves seriously handicapped when they come to college. They study themselves and find that they are hypersensitive, that they have habits of reticence—of withdrawal rather than approach, of embarrassment rather than self-confidence. They do not know how to make friends, or when to go half way to accept friendships. They want to participate in the group life, but have no resources of initiative, or habits of social skill. They would like to recite well, they study their lessons and plan a fine recitation, but when the time comes the words dry up in the mouth, and once more they fail when they wanted to make a good impression.

To know the specific origin of one's inferiority complex helps a good deal. To know that one's trouble is caused by having been considered the "baby," or awkward and unhandy at home for twenty years, helps to decide what to do about it. It is natural for a family of adults to baby the youngest member, but that is not a reason for him to carry over his feelings and habits of *being* a baby into college where he is among equals.

Overcoming a sense of inferiority. The college student has a good chance to overcome the handicaps of his early environment. He is for the first time a grown person amongst others just like himself. And that is significant. Your fellow students are all *just like yourself*. They, too, have been children at home, petted, sheltered, scolded. They too are coming out into college life for the first time "on their own." They are watching your clothes to see if they have bought the right ones for their debut; they are watching your gestures, your air with the professor, your way with the lessons, your manner of tipping your hat to the ladies, or of smiling coyly at the boys.

Those who have the most money and the finest clothes have almost certainly had the least chance to rub up against difficul-

ties, and to learn how to handle themselves in commonplace situations. The rich aristocrat is the shyest, most uncomfortable freshman there is. He doesn't know what to do; he sits quiet, wishing he had had even one year at public school to learn some of the things everybody else seems to know. Sitting quiet and feeling miserable is almost sure to get him the reputation of being a snob. If he were poor, people might realize that he is shy, but nobody ever gives a rich boy credit for having just exactly the same feelings as a poor one. He is most conscious that fine clothes, a good car, and the best room in the dormitory have built a high stone wall around him which the people he would care for most will find it hard to surmount. Nor does he know—not at first—that the gold-digger and the climber will size him up first. They have the technique of climbing such walls. Many a boy's first adventures in friendship have a chance of disappointing results. This can be helped by picking your friends and making the first advance.

To overcome your sense of inferiority you must *first* realize that every normal person has some of it. *Second,* that the basis for it in yourself is probably about the same as in most of those around you. You are not sure of yourself in a new situation which you have not learned how to handle (you may be physically present at college but wholly unadjusted for two or three years), and you are rendered doubly worried and awkward because everything you do seems conspicuous to somebody else. You invent fine speeches in the privacy of your room, but you dare not make them to Millicent when you actually meet her in the hall.

Self-consciousness is the basis of most inferiority complexes. Self-consciousness is the besetting sin of seventy-five per cent of college people. It is a phase of egotism. And if seventy-five per cent of the students around you are thinking of themselves—well, *who* is thinking of *you?* No one of us is half so important and conspicuous in the crowd as we think we are. Nobody ever watches us as we watch ourselves.

Nobody ever cares so much what we do or how we do it as we care.

An inferiority complex is, after all, not a consciousness that we do not amount to much—not really—but an egotism bloated with the fear that somebody, or everybody, *thinks* we do not amount to much, while inside we imagine that we *really are* whizzes if we could only show them.

We shall almost cure ourselves by seeing our inferiority complex for what it really is—a swelled-up egotism that gets bumped into at every turn because we are thinking of it instead of other people and their interests.

Self analysis. If you are suffering from acute egotism and calling it "sensitiveness," or even an inferiority complex, sit down with yourself some fine evening. First, decide just what factors have made you what you are. Are you too easily led? Do people despise you? Do you fail in class? Jot down all the ways in which you are not appreciated. Some of the troubles which you have put down in this list we will talk about later. "I'm just dumb," "I'm homely as the dickens," "I don't know anything about manners," etc., but most of the difficulties you have listed have to do with an exaggerated idea of your own importance to your group.

The answer to that is to start right away and forget yourself by thinking of other people, of things to do, of your work, of anything except yourself. If you want to recite a lesson—why, recite. Don't spend your time wondering what the professor is thinking of you, watching to see if you are going to chew up your words again.

Many students could recite better if they could get used to their own voices talking about these strange new subjects. Go off alone and practice your foreign language *aloud* till you are accustomed to *hearing* your voice. Then try it on your most familiar friends, then on some more casual acquaintance. You are more likely to be able to say in class what you think of "Paradise Regained" if you have talked out your thoughts with

someone beforehand. If you desire to overcome shyness in recitation, talk over your work with your fellow students outside of class.

Study yourself constructively. Discover your best talents. What can you do well? Focus your attention upon your advantages, upon what is already working well in your experience, and from that much assurance go on to acquire other abilities. The small boy who dares not speak to a desirable girl because he knows he will make a botch of it, will turn handsprings in her presence, climb, jump, whistle, and do other things for which he has complete assurance. Try hard to transfer your consciousness of effectiveness in one situation to a sense of power in other and newer situations.

Lastly, take a long and wide view of life. Get yourself into perspective, in your own span of life, and in the span of eternity. The worth of each and every individual, his power and place, must be realized; and at the same time the infinite smallness of this unit of ultimate values in the vast organization of time and space.

Dangers of introspection. I must warn you right away that you who will read these pages the most eagerly are perhaps the very last ones to whom I should be giving the foregoing directions. Those of you who will sit down conscientiously and do the things suggested are too conscientious already. You have been soul-searching now until you have got yourself out of perspective.

There was Anna, who was a dining-room girl at boarding school. Anna's parents had been missionaries. At the time I knew her the father was dead and the mother was taking roomers in the college town. Anna waited upon the table in the dining room to pay for her music, although she roomed at home. Anna was an only child. This is part of her paper, signed because she wanted to see me and get help. Anna will not only state her problem for these pages, but will serve as a case study too, for I followed her career for a long while.

"You ask the class to tell you our personal worries. Well, I have plenty, and because I think maybe you will be willing to help me I am signing my name.

"At home I am happy, free, natural, even with the university girls who room in the house. They understand me for what I am, appreciate my voice, and respect my mother. But here at ———— college the girls are snobbish. All they know is that my mother keeps roomers, that I am a dining-room girl, and, worst of all, my father was a missionary, so that I am almost a foreigner!

"How the girls here do despise me! I feel it in the atmosphere from the moment they file into the dining room until my last service is done. I feel it whenever I walk into a classroom—and I can't do my class work with that oppressed feeling overwhelming me. So that I've had more failures in class than anyone else. I determine that I will *show them,* but when I am called on their scorn wilts me, and takes my mind right away from what I should recite.

"I must overcome this or my college work will be ruined. As it is, my college life, which I expected to be so happy, is a total loss, and worse."

Anna came for a conference within a few minutes after handing in her paper. I knew that somewhere in her early training was the cue to her present difficulty, and after much questioning I found a *buried* complex against house work. She had been brought up in a land where the white foreigner did no manual labor—even before that her family had been aristocrats—people who would go to India and sacrifice wealth, position, ease, but who would not have dreamed of spading the garden or scrubbing the floor.

Anna was entirely unconscious of this deep-seated attitude, having a fine philosophy of the nobility of honest toil with which she rationalized her own and her mother's present status.

Of course it was obvious that Anna had projected her own subconscious feeling to the girls around her. This she could not believe, even though she finally owned the feeling as hers.

But I did persuade her to act as if the girls did not despise her, and to begin with the eight girls whom she was serving at table. It happened one of them was in Anna's French class—and it was work in this class which had taken a sudden slump after the fellow student had been transferred to Anna's table.

I found that Anna had never spoken to this student about anything at all since she had been serving her, although previously they had often exchanged remarks. So I persuaded Anna to say at lunch, "Hello, Eleanor, how's French?"

Eleanor's response was cordial enough: "Haven't got it; how's yours?"

"I did mine last night, for I knew I wouldn't have time to-day."

"Say, Anna, could you help me a minute on mine, so I won't get a flunk? I've got some of it, but didn't have a dictionary, and if you'll only be a sport now—" etc.

Anna faithfully reported to me as per contract that evening. She was already half-way out of her depths, but we set several more special "stunts" for her and within a month her "inferiority complex" was of the remote, transient, scarcely believable past.

Justification for an inferiority complex. Are you really inferior? Take stock of your assets—neglect none of them. Face your liabilities and bad accounts, even the poorest part of your equipment, and make up your mind intelligently what you are going to do about it.

A sense of humility which makes us appreciate the virtues, accomplishments, and successes of another is a definite social asset. The recognition of our own deficiencies, coupled with a sincere effort to overcome them, or compensate for them by a development of our abilities, is of great advantage to us because it enables us to become better persons than we otherwise would.

A bad inferiority complex eats the heart out of a person, and then he is completely handicapped. He is so unhappy that

he has no energy to overcome the feeling or try to make any progress in life. The effect of such an inferiority complex is that the sufferer can never do his best; he is almost sure to make "bad compensations"; that is, to have a bad temper, or to be rude, brutal, or cocksure and overbearing. Sometimes he is just gloomy, without energy, never making any good effort. Sometimes he is jealous, but that is not a real inferiority feeling, because the jealous person really thinks he is as good as the one who gained some advantage over him.

Conceit. There are persons who have a superiority complex; that is, they have a genuine belief, according to which they live and act, that they are a little better than other people, or at least than the people with whom they are compelled to associate. This superiority complex is not a sign of true greatness; the truly great seldom feel or act superior in any way. But there are, of course, persons who have attained success who become conceited about their abilities. We say, "Success has gone to their heads." This superiority complex does not make them any more successful, and does detract from their social success.

There are also persons who are completely satisfied with themselves, though they do not put on airs of superiority. They are smug and "self-satisfied," and are not agreeable companions. Moreover, they are not likely to make any progress in position, or character development.

Under these circumstances it will be seen that persons with an ordinary feeling of inferiority are probably in better condition for improvement and for being liked by those around them than if they are satisfied with themselves, or consider that they are better than the publicans.

The suicide reverie. Any new situation means *strain.* Any failure in the new situation brings regret, shame, embarrassment, despair. The normal immediate reaction is to wish for escape; and since we are in a social world from which there is no escape, the natural wish is for annihilation. This

is only partial, immediate, unreflective. But the direct result of any failure, even an insignificant one, is "I wish I were dead."

If the failure is serious, if there is a poignant emotion, particularly if we are grieved over being misjudged, misunderstood, our thoughts of death may take on some reality. We think of many ways of escape. We want to "crawl into a knothole." We consider running away—later in life we imagine ourselves disappearing—just dropping out—or living on a desert isle, or traveling over the seven seas—our imagination goes on reconstructing another life and another self, and so heals over the first rawness of our wound.

You, of course, do not forget the small boy who would "go out into the garden and eat worms," to make his parents sorry for all their cruel treatment of him. You may remember how Irving Cobb made three youthful heroes, who had broken up an illustrious funeral procession, spend a long fearful day imagining themselves starved to death, the grief of their families when their emaciated bodies should be discovered in the haymow. Hunger drove them home at nightfall.

At first I thought it curious that I had not a single written word from my correspondents about suicide—not even a question. I asked a friend of mine about it. He is a learned psychologist, has had consulting experience. He said: "You won't get any hint of it in a collection of papers, and if you should I guess that case would prove too well-adjusted to prove your point. But it isn't because the thoughts of suicide are rare. I believe that all people have them, frequently, and perhaps throughout their lives. If you are alert, you will get reverberations of them in interviews, they constantly cast their shadows; but even in interviews one rarely gets a clean, frank acknowledgment." Unlike most carefully guarded secret experiences, thoughts of suicide—the "I-wish-I-were-dead" kind—are so frequent in consciousness that we have an habitual but well-recognized wall of inhibition around them. The repressed

or suppressed secrets show themselves up in transmuted form, but consciously guarded thoughts are even more difficult to flush.

A study made a quarter of a century ago indicated that clear and beautiful weather was favorable to suicide.[1] Recent statistics of suicide in America show that California has the highest rate, while Mississippi has the lowest; neither weather nor climate appears to have any important relation to suicide. An extensive discussion of the whole subject may be found in a recent book, *Suicide,* by Ruth Shonle Cavan. Suicide, like other forms of death, may belong among the natural phenomena. It should be influenced by good mental hygiene, and improvement of character, education, just as the percentage of fatalities from typhoid is influenced by good sanitation and education in preventive medicine. There is no doubt that a healthy outlook on life can be won, and that any obsession, whatever it may be, yields to treatment and intelligent living.

I think it quite likely that if people knew that the suicide reverie is a natural, even an inevitable mode of thinking, that probably everybody indulges in it, a basis would be given for wiser management of the more serious crises, when there comes a real anxiety to escape consequence of misunderstanding, or social punishment.

A reverie is a conscious dream or imaginative experience which has no tendency to realize itself in action. Perhaps it is a pleasurable "escape from reality," a reveling in unreality which is a release from the tensions of problem-solving thinking. As sleeping dreams are a "catharsis," a release of dammed emotions, so waking dreams too are a harmless purgation of accumulated, repressed feelings.

One student wrote: "Why is it that I always quail under criticism, am stupid in an unpleasant argument, and completely dumb when scolded? When I get away I feel as if I

[1]Morselli, Henri: *Suicide: An Essay on Comparative Moral Statistics.*

should die of misery. But after awhile I begin to think it over, then I imagine all I might have said, and I get to feeling rather glorious as a result of the scenes I have concocted. If I am specially disgraced, I am likely to imagine these scenes for several days, to comfort myself."

Again and again in fiction do we find that imagining death gives the same comfortable release from reality.

"He pictured himself lying unto death and his aunt bending over him beseeching one little forgiving word, but he would turn his face to the wall and die with that word unsaid. Ah, how would she feel then? And he pictured himself brought home from the river, dead, with his curls all wet, and his sore heart at rest. How she would throw herself upon him, and how her tears would fall like rain, and her lips pray God to give her back her boy and she would never, never abuse him any more! But he would lie there cold and white and make no sign—a poor little sufferer, whose griefs were at an end. He so worked upon his feelings with the pathos of these dreams that he had to keep swallowing, he was so like to choke; and his eyes swam in a blur of water, which overflowed when he winked, and ran down and trickled from the end of his nose. And such a luxury to him was this petting of his sorrows that he could not bear to have any worldly cheeriness or any grating delight intrude upon it; it was too sacred for such contact; and so, presently, when his cousin Mary danced in, all alive with the joy of seeing him home again after an age-long visit of one week to the country, he got up and moved in clouds and darkness out at one door as she brought song and sunshine in at the other.

"He wandered far from the accustomed haunts of boys, and sought desolate places that were in harmony with his spirit. A log raft in the river invited him, and he seated himself on its outer edge and contemplated the dreary vastness of the stream, wishing, the while, that he could only be drowned, all at once and unconsciously, without undergoing the uncomfortable

routine devised by nature. Then he thought of his flower. He got it out, rumpled and wilted, and it mightily increased his dismal felicity. He wondered if *she* would pity him if she knew. Would she cry, and wish that she had a right to put her arms around his neck and comfort him? Or would she turn coldly away like all the hollow world? This picture brought such an agony of pleasurable suffering that he worked it over and over again in his mind and set it up in new and varied lights, till he wore it threadbare."[2]

The suicide reverie is one of our interesting ways of "magnifying the ego," based, perhaps, on the experiences we have had in hearing eulogies of the dead, which suggest that we too may acquire the attention and appreciation in death denied us in prosaic life.

Obsessions of suicide. Occasionally men and women brood over their failures until they become obsessed with the idea of escape. Normally, a good wholesome fear of the new, of the unknown, is a force which holds us all in the narrow confines of habit. We stay on in this life because we fear another.

Then, too, there is a deep and imperative "will to live," deeper than mere human consciousness, more imperative than any other drive. It is implanted in the physical nature. It can be superseded in only two ways—first, by a moral courage that has its roots in the Universal Spirit; second, by an obsession which cuts off all other considerations and rushes the body forward to carry out the mad impulse toward self-destruction.

Such obsessions in other fields are common enough, and vary from the mild (but often unconquerable) impulse to make cutting remarks to someone whom we cannot like, to the blind impulse to rush into a fire, or jump from a high building. The impulse to quit the job of becoming worth while sometimes gets the better of us. When once we fail ourselves it is a long hard

[2] *Tom Sawyer,* by Mark Twain. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers, publishers.

road up to reintegration of personality. Lost self-respect is very difficult to regain.

Perhaps most readers of this book have heard of "the suicide wave." Such a "wave" occurred during the years of 1926-1928, and affected adolescents and young adults particularly. At that time a good deal was written about suicide, and the book which was just mentioned was perhaps stimulated by the recent interest in the subject.[3]

One defect of our thinking is the "personal equation," that tendency spoken of in Chapter VII (p. 71), to relate everything in the universe to our own immediate self and its present moment of existence. The need of a philosophic perspective is nowhere more evident than with regard to matters having a morbid interest for us. Therefore we were inclined to think that something peculiar in our civilization of 1928 caused suicide.

Suicide "waves" have occurred as far back as history gives us records. Moreover, there seems to be some seasonal distribution in suicide statistics.

"Did you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven soul and fearful?"

One need hardly say that to play, even, with the idea of suicide is unwise, and indicates a mental state that should give way to braver thinking.

Perhaps a review of some salient points concerning the inferiority complex will help to set you in the way of a constructive mental hygienic attitude.

1. The inferiority complex (or feeling) is caused by a person's inability to manage some situation or situations so as to win the approval of people around him. This feeling often starts in home discipline, or other childhood difficulty.

[3] Cavan, Ruth Shonle: *Suicide,* University of Chicago Press, 1929.

2. Sensitiveness to the social judgment is a necessary and normal sensitivity. This is the basis of the conformity which makes a society possible.

3. Some people are wisely (or accidentally) helped to make a good social adjustment. They learn how to endure blame, to value praise, to act suitably without submerging personality, to be acceptable without being "yes men."

4. Some people have not learned how to act suitably, and so are exposed to social opprobrium. This is what they want to learn in college—how to become more acceptable persons, how to "make good," how to become leaders, to gain power and the other goods for which men strive.

5. For overcoming a sense of inferiority it helps to remember that the students around you have come out of similar situations into a life as new to them as to you. No matter how they look on the outside, they are probably feeling on the inside just as you do.

6. It helps to recognize the fact that self-consciousness is self-centeredness; that one can learn to direct the thoughts to other persons and things, away from one's own concerns and feelings.

7. Taking stock of one's assets helps to evaluate one's possibilities and to plan for one's best in life.

CHAPTER IX

THE GENIUS, THE ORDINARY DUB, AND THE MORON

Introduction. For ten years now I. Q.'s have been in style. Not many of us know an I. Q. when we see it; nevertheless, we do have some notion of what it means. I have found a general curiosity about the I. Q. even among college students who have had the mental tests and perhaps courses in psychology.

For in most institutions the I. Q. of any individual is a profound secret. Especially is the secret of his own I. Q. kept from the student himself. Should the student know his own I. Q? There is a difference of opinion, but evidently the majority vote on the faculty is "no." My own vote is "yes." I think that all facts of importance to the student's understanding of himself and adjustment to life should be known to him. The argument against instructing the student concerning his native ability is the same argument as that against sex instruction.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing." The answer is Pope's "Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring." Of course the student should know the facts—that the best mental tests are still not infallible, and that continued study does improve what was once thought to be "native," and therefore unimprovable, ability.

We are not all born geniuses, and it will save many heart-burnings and useless expenditure of time and bitter labor to know just where we stand.

"Chemistry is so hard for me. I work and work, and then it is heart-breaking to get a cut.

"I spend two hours on every lesson and still do not get it. I seldom go to town or the show, and attend no meetings unless required. I also get up early in the morning to study."

"I don't live up to the confidence my parents have in me. My parents think I am capable of making better grades than I do. I realize I didn't study as hard as I should have last year, due mostly to the fact that I was sick and in the Infirmary so much. When I would come back after four weeks over there, my work had piled up very much and I became blue. My parents were heartbroken when I didn't make Phi Theta last year. My mother cried about it. She would write me the most pitiful letters telling me how I had disappointed them and how they did everything for me to make me good. It almost killed me. They told me this summer they would give me a chance to redeem myself this year and make Phi Theta. Since I came back to school I have really studied every minute I have had. I have only been to the show twice since I came back and that was on Saturday nights. Other Saturday nights I have studied or fixed my clothes. Now that the first six weeks are up I am wondering about my ranking. It seems that I am in the second quartile, and it worries me, for I have really studied. All the girls tell me that I am crazy to study so hard. I would be willing to study night and day if I could only please my parents. I am constantly worrying about this. I am afraid all the time I will get cuts and lose credit, then my parents will be more than heartbroken.

"One girl from home came here and made a good record. Her parents have said, 'Yes, our girl is smarter.' I can't bear that."

"I studied very hard the first of the year to keep from getting a cut, and now I have to work hard to keep up my reputation, for everyone thought I was bright."

"I feel that the Lord has given me talents, but they are certainly hidden."

"I have an almost maddening desire to express myself in some medium—music, painting, or writing."

"My greatest worry is living up to what my family thinks I should be. All the rest are successful and talented, but all the bad streaks in both sides of the family have come out in me."

"The class was given a mental test and I found out that I rank well below the middle. I have not been getting along well in college, though I never had any particular trouble in high school. Now I have an inferiority complex and know that I can never succeed in my studies."

"Since these new intelligence tests have come into style we ordinary dubs feel as if we might as well get out and take jobs as ditch-diggers. College is getting to be more and more for the genius and the rich boy."

Personality and intelligence. If we are going to make the most of ourselves, we must get some clear working ideas about our own native ability. The Declaration of Independence asserts that "all men are born free and equal," but that does not take account of the amount of brains with which we were endowed.

The psychologists are quarreling a good deal about "intelligence tests," what they mean, and the chance of improving the "native ability" which is supposed to be tested. At least one thing is pretty clear. By means of several different tests (a "battery of tests") a student may find out whether he ranks around the average, or above, or below. It is possible, in other words, by having tests carefully given to get some idea of the mental equipment nature has given us to work with.

Some such objective measure of our ability is important for our guidance, because we usually have no other means of getting any true judgment of ourselves. In our childhood the estimate of our ability will depend upon the disposition of our family and friends. Most parents are disposed to believe their offspring to be the smartest, brightest, most wonderful children in the world. A child fortunate enough to have brothers and sisters not only divides this parental approval with them, but must endure the belittlement which is the usual attitude of brothers and sisters.

Nearly always our most intimate companions either overestimate our ability because of affection or underestimate it

because our deficiencies are so evident. Any student who is going to know himself intelligently should get a fair idea of his real intellectual ability in order that the information may become a working basis for his program of self-development. To brood upon a fact of nature is disastrous. One must accept an average Intelligence Quotient ("I. Q.") or even a low I. Q. just as one accepts red hair or a tendency to get fat. Always, however, remembering that one can compensate for low intelligence by hard work, by finding abilities and making the most of them, and by cultivating social qualities which more than compensate for deficiencies in the special traits measured in a mental test.

High school grades. In many high schools students make good records, even in class work, on other points besides intellectual ability. High schools are beginning to apply the same standards of scholarship in their classrooms as are used in college; but up to the present time many students of small ability have been able to make good grades in a high-school course. The reason why is not to our point here. But if you are one of those who made high grades in your high school and are making low grades in college, you should not jump to the conclusion that the fault is all with the college.

The transfer from home, from a friendly high school, and from the protections of childhood put a great strain upon anyone. It is difficult to use one's best intelligence for studying lessons, and very hard indeed if one does not happen to have brains as good as he thought he had in high school.

Then, again, methods of studying, demands for recitations, and the freedom from supervision may be so new in college that you have not become adjusted from the high-school discipline. If one of your college problems is worry over your college work, it would be well for you to have some candid, thoroughgoing judgment as to your ability so you will know what you have to go on, or are up against.

What is the "normal distribution of intelligence"?

"The question as to the manner in which intelligence is distributed is one of great practical as well as theoretical importance. One of the most vital questions which can be asked by any nation of any age is the following: 'How high is the average level of intelligence among our people, and how frequent are the various grades of ability above and below the average?' With the development of standardized tests we are approaching, for the first time in history, a possible answer to this question."[1]

If one thousand men are measured for height and the results plotted on a sheet of paper, where the base line is the heights ranging from the shortest (perhaps 4 feet, 7 inches), to the tallest (perhaps 6 feet, 4 inches), it will be found that the great majority of measurements will fall about midway of these two extremes—about 5 feet, 9 inches. Now, if the curve is so plotted that the highest point is where the greatest number of cases occurs, this point will be found at about 5 feet, 9 inches, and the curve will run down to the base line at the left where the one shortest man is recorded, and to the base line at the right, where the one tallest man is recorded.

The curve which would result from plotting these measurements is called the Normal Distribution Curve. The tests invented for general intelligence by Binet, Binet and Simon, Terman, and the army psychologists gave measurements of large groups of people, and when the results of these Intelligence Tests were plotted they were found to follow the Normal Distribution Curve.

Terman thus states one conclusion from his tests of school children: "Since the frequency of the various grades of intelligence decreases gradually and at no point abruptly on each side of the median (see Woodworth, R. S.: *Psychology,* p. 280, footnote), it is evident that there is no definite dividing line between normality and feeble-mindedness, or between normal-

[1] Terman, Lewis M.: *The Measurement of Intelligence,* p. 65. Used by permission of and by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

ity and genius. Psychologically, the mentally defective child does not belong to a distinct type, nor does the genius. There is no line of demarcation between either of these extremes and the so-called 'normal' child."[2]

It would require a whole chapter to explain about mental testing. If any of you want to read an interesting account which tells how it happens that one's intelligence level is called an "I. Q." (which are the initials of "Intelligence Quotient"), and what "mental age" and "chronological age" mean, find the chapter on Intelligence in Woodworth's *Psychology,* Chapter XII. In this chapter Professor Woodworth says: "College freshmen evidently are, as they should be, a highly selected group in regard to intelligence. . . . All of the freshmen, in fact, lie well above the median for the general population. A freshman who scores below one hundred points finds it very difficult to keep up in his college work. Sometimes, it must be said, a freshman who scores not much over one hundred in the test does very well in his studies, and sometimes one who scores very high in the test has to be dropped for poor scholarship, but this last is probably due to distracting interests."[3]

Woodworth goes on to point out that intelligence tests, as given to many freshmen in college, do not cover the whole range of intelligent behavior. They do not test practical ability or ability to handle people, nor can they discover any of the more subtle differences in emotion, temperament, or gifts of genius. However, they do indicate very important differences in ability among people, and we can find out much that is vital for us to know about ourselves by having a thoroughly expert psychologist give us not one but several tests—intelligence tests, performance tests, and others which make up what is known as a "battery of tests."

The genius. What to do if you are one. It is the

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[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 67.

[3] Woodworth, R. S.: *Psychology,* p. 281. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, publishers.

general custom, if a student has exceptional ability, if he is away above the average, to exclaim, "Heaven be praised, blessings on him!" and to assume that with that equipment he will sail along in life with flags flying. As a matter of history, however, some of the worst misfits, some of the most miserable people, and some of the worst students rank in the upper ten per cent of the normal intelligence curve.

Proverbially, geniuses have a hard time of it. The college schedule is not made up for one who has an ache to practice the flute ten hours a day, and spend ten minutes on his higher mathematics. The boy who carries bugs around and spends all his time with microscopes and butterfly nets is most unhappy meeting the requirements of English I, or two years of foreign language.

However, the matter should, after all, be left to him, to his adviser, and to the personnel department. Students who are misfits for any reason, and who are not getting from college all they require for their soul's development should make liberal use of the personnel service. Where this is not adequate, they should seek good and impartial advice from the wisest educators and psychologists in the college itself, or from the authorities of some other college which specializes in understanding student problems, because few outsiders, not even alumni, understand the inner problems of a college.

Obviously, the student who is not happy in his work owes it to himself to sit right down and think things out. Why are you not happy? Or at least content? Are your grades too low to satisfy you? Do you have to dig long and hard for what you get so that you are missing some of the important features of life? Do you dislike your work intensely? Or fail to see what it is all about?

Such questions as these should be frankly put to your adviser. The effectiveness of personality depends upon getting a straightaway start on these important points. Your adviser will tell you how to find yourself. He will give you a battery

of mental tests which will furnish an objective estimate of your I. Q.—your general intelligence. He can give you some personality ratings, such as will be explained in a later part of this chapter.

But if you feel the stirrings of strange dreams within you, if you have hopes and ambitions too sacred to share, if somewhere deep in your soul is the divine spark, cling to it with all your soul. Let no personnel service discourage it. Let no mental tester, who may find you lacking in his tests, put a fire extinguisher on you.

Awhile ago we talked about lonely souls—it is the genius who is loneliest. But the genius who knows himself, who has ideals of sharing life, who is willing to learn how to live socially, need not suffer from great misunderstanding. Usually the eccentric genius has made the same bad adjustment to his situations as any other misfit is likely to make. The Jew who is rejected from the group because of his race is no worse off than the musical genius who is rejected because he cannot get interested in English I, or the artist who flunks chemistry because he despises it. Partly the teachers of English and chemistry are to blame for not knowing the living interests of their students and fitting their instruction to them. Partly the students are to blame for not facing their subjects frankly as a situation demanding their most intelligent efforts at adjustment.

The student should go to his instructor and say: "Here, I'm interested in the flute, or in singing, or in painting. If I must take English I and chemistry, give me the clues to them, their relation to *me* and *my* life. My life must be bigger and wider than any art, I know; therefore I am in college and here to make college courses part of me. I need help in finding myself in these classes."

The men and women with talent, with superior intelligence, with genius, are the hope of our race's future. Colleges more and more are coming to search for genius and to develop it.

But meanwhile geniuses must come more than half way. They must discover themselves. They must always make their own adjustments to situations, or they will always be misfits, more or less, in a world of averages, of norms.

Pain is necessary to character, striving to development, but geniuses will get enough of that at best. They need not develop eccentricity as a compensation for their lack of "normalcy." Once again Rabbi Ben Ezra:

> "Then, welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
> Be our joys three-parts pain!
> Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
> Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
> grudge the throe!
> For thence—a paradox
> Which comforts while it mocks—
> Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
> What I aspired to be,
> And was not, comforts me:
> A brute I might have been, but would not
> sink i' the scale."

The ordinary dub. Not many of us are geniuses, though it usually takes some hard knocks to get that fact through our dumb heads. The dream of youth—the normal, average dream of normal, average adolescence—is of that great day (about the time we are twenty-one) when all the world will be at our feet. We are not sure whether our voice will charm the multitudes—we warble a few notes *á la* John McCormack just to try it out; or whether our tragic acting will enthrall the vast crowds beyond the footlights—we strike a tentative pose and hearken to the hushed breathing out where the S. R. O. sign gleams in the picture of the future. We groan over the halting rimes which are all too inadequate for the visions of our souls; we tremble with the magic heroes and heroines who will some day usher from our brain cells, *via* our fountain

pens, and not only become best sellers but also transform themselves into country houses and membership in literary clubs.

Oh, the dreams of our youth! Here we are in college, living in the drab light of common day, no better than the next man, unwept, unhonored, and unsung. We can't seem to get a look-in at the drama club performances, we get a *D* on the only poem we venture to hand in. Even our hopes of political power suffer the black blight in face of difficulties in getting anybody's interest, or friendship, or even a passing nickname. We come to college and right away are lost in the forest and have a time just managing to get along somehow. We aren't in on things, nobody cares—or knows—whether we live or die. We spend a week in the infirmary and come out only to find that our nearest neighbor in "psych" hadn't noticed it was somebody else who took our seat the day we vacated it.

Well, friends, such is life. After all, our main job in living is to find ourselves and be satisfied to make a difference to ourselves and to those who will inevitably form our circle. We will always matter to *somebody,* mother, father, a few real friends, some girl somewhere (or boy)—a little niche on earth that *nobody* else can fill.

But the universe was made for us—the ordinary people. *We* run the universe. *We* are the ones who make life hard for the man of genius so that he becomes queer, mean, insane, to make up for not having been born "normal." *We* are the ones who must shepherd along the weak, who provide asylum for the poor, who teach, and train, and conserve all the great tradition of the past, and carry on into the future. *We* are the people. *We* are the human race.

After all, the compensation for the loss of dreams, impossibility—is work, reality. The college is made for us, it is our oyster. Its trials are our mountains to climb, its rewards are mostly for us. We decide its politics by our votes, and its fate, later, by our alumni activities.

No two of us are alike. To each is given a place, an im-

portance, a talent. We must slowly come out of our adolescent dream—we must share the common lot of man. But at the same time we must realize our worth as individuals. For, after all, it is not as "the masses" that people live and work and die, but as persons, as units, as hoping, loving, suffering human beings.

So, once again, we come back to Pope's couplet:

> "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is man."

Search your heart for your talents, your will to live and to make life worth living, your values to yourself, and to those to whom you are of ultimate worth.

What is a moron? Properly speaking, a moron is a person whose intelligence is below the average, but not low enough to make him an imbecile or an idiot. The psychologists never intended that the word "moron" should come to mean a person of bad morals, or of defective emotional control. Because some persons with low intelligence have been also moral and emotional degenerates, the term "moron" has been popularly but wrongly used to designate them.

The dull child is technically described by the psychologist as a moron, and we have no other good technical name for him.[4] So that in this chapter we shall talk about morons and shall mean those persons who are "born stupid," but not defective either mentally, morally, or emotionally. If they become immoral, or neurotic, that is because they have not faced their

[4] Lewis M. Terman says: "Of the feeble-minded, those between 50 and 70 I. Q. include most of the morons (high, middle, and low), those between 20 or 25 and 50 are ordinarily to be classed as imbeciles, and those below 20 or 25 as idiots. According to this classification, the adult idiot would range up to about 3-year intelligence as the limit, the adult imbecile would have a mental level between 3 and 7 years, and the adult moron would range from about 7-year to 11 year intelligence." —*The Measurement of Intelligence*, p. 79. Used by permission of and by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

life situations squarely in the light of the equipment which nature gave them to meet their situations.

Society discovered about a century ago that in a democracy (it is being discovered also in societies which are not democracies) the safety of government and of social living depends upon universal education. So the public school was invented as a means for giving everybody education, and compulsory education laws were passed to enforce school attendance upon every child.

Now, if we were to test all children born, we would obviously find that they range from the lowest idiot to the highest genius. The public school very seldom gets the lowest idiot, for he is incapable of caring for himself. When his family does not care for him he is cared for by the State in some sort of asylum.

However, the public school does get many children who are near idiots. Now that there is considerable enlightenment in the school systems, the worst cases at the bottom of the intelligence scale are taken care of in institutions. Also there are special rooms and ungraded rooms for the more stupid children who cannot take public education along with the average child. All sorts of misfits get into these ungraded rooms. Nowadays psychologists are studying these children and are finding that some children get into a special room not because of poor intelligence, but because of poor eyesight or hearing or nutrition; or because they have not found out how to meet the school situation, they are timid, or emotionally unbalanced. Such cases are provided for in ways appropriate to their needs. The public-school system is designed to fit every child for some serviceable place in life, and is trying to perform this duty well.

The high school is a part of the public school, and although not all children are required to go to high school, still many more go than formerly did. Children with aptitude for learning complete the grades before the law allows them to leave

school, and they go on automatically until the age when the law permits them to leave and go to work. Another group go to high school because their families continue to send them as long as they are interested and successful in their studies. With the prosperity of our country there has been a tremendous increase in the number of children who continue for four years in high school and who go on from high school into college.

This is not the place to discuss the problem of whether a college education should be available for the majority of youth in a democracy. In the quotation from Woodworth on page 105 the statement is made that "college freshmen evidently are, *as they should be,* a highly selected group in regard to intelligence." Most of our college entrance committees seem to agree with this idea—that college is for the more intelligent group of the population, and mental tests are given applicants to weed out all but the "upper ten per cent." The colleges are not equipped to teach all the persons who graduate from high school and have leisure and money to apply for a college course. So the colleges must select their students—what more natural than to try to select the most intelligent groups?

Colleges are not only geared up for the bright student, but are determined to use every device they can invent to throw out the stupid, inefficient, lazy, unscholarly person.

If any worried reader of these pages thinks he (or she) is one of those whom his college is determined to "flunk out," it behooves him to get right down to brass tacks and think himself through. Is he in college just because of the law of inertia? Newton's First Law of Motion is, "Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, unless it be compelled by external force to change that state." It is much easier and simpler and more comfortable to keep on going to school, the motion having been started at the age of six, than to break off at the end of high school and start the new habits of a grown-up, an adult, who shoulders the burden

of earning a living. If "everybody is going to college," and dad does not exert any "external force," then college is likely to follow high school as the night the day.

Also we hear of very pleasant doings at college. The Saturday Evening Post sometimes publishes interesting stories of college football, the newspapers give a good deal of space to college athletics, and the young people at home for vacation have much to say about the fraternities, sororities, the prom, the frolics, the college life in general. So naturally we just go on to college with the rest of "our crowd"—and here we are.

Have we any business here? Well, we are not wanted if we are morons, and we are not likely to stay unless we find out quickly what we are, and why we are here. Moreover, this is our only life, and we are living it rapidly—to-day comes but once, why dilly-dally around just waiting for somebody else to start us on our real life?

But students should know that college professors are no different from anybody else, and may themselves conform to a normal distribution curve if tested on ability to judge the worth of students.

The other day I made a disparaging remark concerning a certain student's ability, and her dean (who has had many years of successful experience, and is wise) said: "She showed persistence in getting her way, exceptional keenness in finding an interpretation of our catalogue to suit her, and forcefulness in putting her case. Besides, she is poised and can hold her ground well. She will be a credit to her class." I quote this dean, as a hint to you. It may indicate qualities of a student, in her reaction to her dean, well worth cultivating.

If we must have college for our vital life purposes, no mental test, no dean in the world has any right to exclude us from a college course. But it is up to us to prove to ourselves, and to all the world if necessary, that it is college we want, college we need, and college we are going to have in order to live out the life we are determined upon for ourselves.

CHAPTER X

MAKING FRIENDS

"FRIENDSHIP renders prosperity more brilliant, while it lightens adversity by sharing it and making its burden common" (Cicero).

The question of friendships is a great and serious question in this generation of crowded city life, and the independence youth displays toward home and the sheltering, fostering care of parents. Parents no longer find it possible to control their children's friendships, consequently they wash their hands of responsibility for seeing that their young people have friends. Somehow the boy and girl must select and judge their friends, must know how to make the approach, to develop the social life, beginning with the introduction—"I'm glad to meet you," step by step to the point where friendship is established, or the impossibility or undesirability of friendship is evident.

Here is what happened to a junior boy in his adventure in friendship.

"I had a boy friend last year, but he proved false. I shall never trust anyone so fully again. But what I want to know is, is it the ideal thing from your point of view to learn to be self-sufficient?"

Some time ago I met a group of business girls in the evenings. Their questions revolved about friendship, love, and marriage. Here are some samples.

"How can one make friends in the large, hard city? I have lived and worked here ten years, and my only real friend is my landlady. She probably would never have time to be my friend if I should move."

"I have many friends, but no intimate friends who would follow me up if put to the hardest test of all in a city life—getting a job in another office. We might meet each other for a minute's chat at lunch hour, or even hunt each other up occasionally for an evening movie. But it isn't like it used to be back home, where we *loved* each other and needed each other. I *need* friends—or a friend—but how to make one?"

"The city is the loneliest place in the world for a girl."

This from a man, unmarried, who has lived in a city for twelve years:

"The city is the loneliest place in the world for a man. It is almost impossible to make men friends—they are all married and have family friends. You never know about the women you meet in business. Acquaintances, plenty of friends—yes, of a kind. But *friends*——"

The problem of making friends in college becomes a problem of personality adjustment. In the smaller institutions attendance at the same class is a sufficient introduction, and custom sanctions students speaking to each other without further ceremony.

In larger universities this is not the case—students no more speak in a class without an introduction than they do in a city street car. But even in smaller colleges the privileges of campus acquaintance are not always accepted off the campus.

"My problem is how to pick out the right kind of friends from such a large number of students."

"When I first meet a group of young people it is very hard for me to know what to talk about, especially with young men."

"When I want to make my very best impression upon people I fail. There is a girl I admire very much and she is everything I would like to be. At the first of school she paid particular attention to me and I had every chance to form a wonderful friendship, but I was so tongue-tied in her presence that

she must have thought me 'dumb.' Now she is nice to me but she is no longer interested, just because I could not be myself. This is only one example of the times I have wanted to make a good impression and failed."

"I am not a good mixer with girls of my own age."

"I do not make friends easily."

"I would rather have one or two chums than a lot of friends, so it is hard to be nice to everybody."

"When I am introduced to people I do not know how to start a conversation."

"I feel so abashed and inferior in the presence of superiors and strangers that I cannot appear composed, and everything interesting that I know to talk about leaves me. The trouble is self-consciousness, timidity, and too much reserve. Another thing, people whom I admire most take no notice of me. On the other hand, I cannot conceal a dislike for people whose manners are rough and crude."

These are examples of the need for help in making their social adjustments which these young people themselves realize.

In the *Survey* for July, 1929, Dr. Ruth Shonle Cavan tells about the "Girl Who Writes Your Letters." Doctor Cavan has made a study of the stenographers in Chicago. She says:

"In Chicago fifty per cent of the girls questioned started to work before they were seventeen years old; in smaller cities of the Middle West, twenty-five per cent started to work before they were seventeen. The business world is an adult world; it is impersonal; it is hard; its interest is in money, production, trade, not in the feelings, emotions, and longings of young girls. . . .

"Two problems in particular in this process of adjustment stand out for the business girl. In the first place, she must work out a new relationship with her parents. In a great many

families the daughter is thought of by the parents as so much one of the family that it is taken for granted that her salary will be turned over in its meager entirety to the mother. . . .

"The second problem is the disposition of free time and the use of the greater liberty from parental control which business girls gradually gain. . . .

"In solving these problems attendant upon her youth, of finding a husband and being at the same time a competent worker, of adjusting to a foreign home, often, and an American office, the business girl would profit by wise adult guidance and by an increased number of organizations, such as clubs, to give her stability as she seeks new friends and interests."[1]

The choice of friends. Emerson says, "Happy is the house that shelters a friend." A few lines farther on he gives the elements of true friendship.

"There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named. One is Truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. . . . The other element of friendship is Tenderness. . . . When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune."[2]

This world is a well of loneliness if we have no friends. Yet there are thousands upon thousands of people without real friends. If they live in families, they may find compensation, or, indeed, may not even miss friendships. But members of families eventually go their ways, and only one's friendships remain. In all the busy circle around us there may be not one for whom we may even for a moment throw off the outer husk of mere acquaintance to reach the inner human reality of truth and tenderness.

Upon what basis should one choose friends? Too often we are deluded by some vague Platonic theory of affinity, as if a

[1] Reprinted by permission of Survey Associates, Inc., publishers.
[2] Emerson, *Essay on Friendship*.

subtle magnetism will draw you toward some one individual peculiarly adapted to your own personality. Such a dream is not usually realized.

There are two customary criteria for selecting or accepting a friend. Friendship may be given to a person who needs us; or we may cultivate a friendship because it contributes to our own personality.

I knew a girl who was popular in college. She had a large following. She was loved, and in her 'teens loved many of the boys and girls who were her friends. She was admired and respected by her elders—the faculty, and others. She spent hours with the perplexed and weak and homesick. But at the end of her senior year this girl told me of the tragedy of her college life—never once had she had time for the friendships of the strong and splendid people whom she admired. She knew she might have had their friendship and companionship, but she had permitted herself to be swamped in the current of helping the weaker people. She had had no time for relaxed and long hours with the great souls who were near her in her college days. What should she have done about it?

A wise friend of my own said once: "We never get anything for nothing, not even friendships. We must sometimes make sacrifice of time, self-interest, effort for our friends; and if they are truly friends, they do the same for us. But the reward is always greater than the price we pay."

In choosing friends we must accept the conditions of any social living, namely, paying some price of time and self-sacrifice. We may accept the friendship of those whom we shall serve. But always there should be a large share of one's heart and time left for the friends who meet us on our own ground, and grow with us in an inner life of spirit.

How, then, shall one go about making friends of either and both kinds?

What should one say first after the introduction?

"There is always an awkward pause, and to relieve the awk-

wardness, I escape as soon as possible, though I want to go on and have a good time."

By actual count of all the difficulties told me about friendship, by both boys and girls, the most frequent was "I don't know what to say when I meet a new person." There are parties, and people meet each other only to drift apart because the second step, that of establishing a common bond, or of opening a mental interest, is never taken.

The worst of it is that it is so specific and personal no outsider can tell you what to say. I read this sentence a few minutes ago, "There are worse topics than the weather for polite conversation." What in the world would people do without the weather! Perhaps you think grown-up, wise, witty people have so much in their minds that they do not need to use the weather to fill in gaps. But they do, always and everywhere, a dozen times a day. I once made up my mind that I would not speak of the weather for lack of something else to say, but I could not live up to the resolution.

It is the custom now to develop a "line"—a most boring custom. Half the younger people I know have a "line"—which varies but slightly from group to group. It is sensible to develop some special interest upon which you can speak with some degree of authority, if a suitable occasion arises; but to become famous for novel uses of slang, or for the ability to "jolly," or for a pessimistic outlook upon life, or for persistent jests, puns, and anecdotes—none of these is indication of a worth-while character.

What shall you say first? You need not feel that you must be clever. Another negative answer—avoid any unkind criticism or remark about anything. We are always hearing of some error similar to that of the young man, desperate for a wedge to open conversation, who remarked, "Who's that fat bun in the purple dress?" To which the girl answered, "That's my mother!" "Oh, no, I mean the elephant, the regular whale in the light purple, the lavender?" "That's my auntie."

One may always find kind, pleasant things to say. The tendency to say, "Isn't it a beautiful evening?" may be checked if there is a storm outside. It is then good psychology to say, "What a good time everybody is having!" Let your first thoughts together be pleasant. Do *not* call attention to a storm. Do not say, "How hot it is in here!" but suggest, "How cool you look in that white dress." Your potential friend will then know you are pleased with her appearance and you both have an agreeable mutual thought.

Later you may share your sorrows as well as your joys, but don't forget that friendships *start* in a happy mutual thought.

How to find friends. In college young people of our own age, interest, and status in life are all around us. There is no dearth of potential friends. Therefore this section will have in mind that large group of young people who are not in colleges.

I have seen the question asked again and again in newspaper columns, How can I meet the right people? More frequently than we imagine the "right people" meet each other in business. Women find their congenial friends among other women in their own business more frequently than elsewhere. So also men. The problem which really is a *problem* has to do with making friends of the opposite sex.

There is always some suspicion of the man-woman relationship in business, but each situation is a law unto itself. Men and women do meet naturally, learn each other's innermost hearts, eventually marry and make homes.

But suppose one is stranded—a woman is a school-teacher and in the natural round of her work does not have an opportunity to meet an unmarried man once in a year? Or a man is in an office with men only? or in some industry where there are no women?

In such cases these have to find their friendships outside their work. The newspaper answer is invariably "Go to a young people's meeting of a church." Two or three years ago

"Slow Clubs" were formed in several cities—groups which were out for a good time, yet not a "fast" time. The Slow Club members were not interested in drinking, cabaret life, or promiscuous "petting" and "necking." Under other names these social groups are still flourishing in many centers, for they meet a real need.

It is not considered unmaidenly for a girl to plan definitely to go where she is likely to make the kind of friends she desires. Consequently, she plans her vacations with that in mind.

But when all is said, the problem of a satisfying social life in a great city, and often in a small town, is an increasingly difficult one. However, let us assume that the crux of the problem is not how to meet a potential friend, but how to be attractive personally. What are the techniques of making friends of people when met?

"How Can I Be Attractive?" Whether you are boy or girl, rich or poor, young or old, keep an attractive person. I would not think it necessary to put in even a short paragraph to this effect if it were not one of the rules of social effectiveness most frequently broken. Absolute cleanliness and tidiness are expensive. They require constant vigilance, use of time, energy, money. It is because of this that so few people can be well groomed. They do not have time. They do not know how. Very few people, comparatively, know how to manicure their own nails, care for their hair, keep their shoes perfectly neat. They do not have time to keep their clothes pressed and in perfect repair, and they cannot afford too frequent cleaners' bills for their coats, dresses, gloves, and hats.

But there is another side to this question. I admit that standards of good grooming are not high among either men or women, and perhaps a too-well-dressed person will set himself or herself apart from the group, and so become alienated more readily than respected. Women and men scorn a "sissy" and men look askance at too tidy an "old maid" of any age.

Therefore suit your person to the occasion, keeping as high an ideal as you can.

Clean, artistic appearance is only one small answer to the question, How can I be attractive? The expression on one's face is more important than the style of hat one wears. The expression of the face is the result of years of thinking and feeling. To resolve to look pleasant no matter how we feel means that we put on a mask, which is more obvious than a toupee. We may cultivate an habitual smile, but it will look artificial. We must have a pleasant soul. We do not need to be happy, to feel perfectly comfortable, or even to be free from suffering, trouble, or anxiety, in order to wear a fine, attractive expression. He who has never experienced pain or agony has never triumphed over them.

Years ago a beautiful young woman was the object of considerable interest in a small psychology class. Privately most of us thought "there was nothing to Vera," yet we couldn't quite see why we thought so. She was pretty, she was bright, she liked everybody, she was generous with her fun and money—but there seemed to be neither depth, nor breadth, nor positive virtue nor negative vice. One day we were talking about "obstacles developing character," and Vera exclaimed, "That's what's the matter with me." You can imagine we were all surprised, some of us thinking perhaps she had at some time overheard our speculations. But she went on, "I never feel anything very deeply. I am contented all the time—sometimes it seems that I am only half awake. I can never remember having had the smallest trouble in my whole life, nor difficulty. I don't believe I've had a contrast in my experience, to know what the other side of life would be like."

That was twenty years ago. I suppose Vera has had her share of troubles by this time, and I often wonder how she has met them. I believe she had possibilities of strength.

Your facial expression and body posture tell the story of your life. Are you fine and fearless, cheerful in discouraging

times and brave in disaster? Or, are you envious, whining over discomforts, whimpering over troubles, beaten by the storms of life, and defeated by its failure? It is not the man or woman who has no troubles who is attractive, but the one who wins from troubles "an understanding heart."

How can I make everybody like me? This is a very hard job. How can I like everybody? is just about as hard.

This is the question of popularity, and that goes back to the elusive quality we call "an attractive personality." More than anything else people of all ages want to be well known and well liked. Often the very effort to become well known prevents people being well liked. The man who cannot become noted may prefer being notorious to not being well known at all. We often see this in smaller ways in any social group.

It is easy enough to become conspicuous, but a slower job to become known for the average fine virtues which most people possess. The chapter on "Leadership" gives some suggestions for making one's mark in the group without resort to publicity stunts. The secret lies in the never-failing resolution of seizing every possible opportunity to do small things well, to do kind things for all people (not simply for the "right" people), and to be interested in others, their woes and their welfare.

How few people are willing to listen! They want to talk, thinking they will make a fine impression by saying smart and clever things. Smartness or cleverness is all too often at somebody's expense. If the new girl down the counter can say bright and witty things about the customers the minute they have turned their backs, I may laugh and enjoy her sallies hugely. But my enjoyment is considerably dampened by the fear that she will say clever and smart things about me behind *my back*. On the other hand, if she says: "How tired that woman looked! I wish there were stools for customers when they have so much shopping they must do," that is neither funny nor smart, but if the girl is like that, she is a potential

friend to me. The girl next to her may reply with a "wise crack"—you see the new girl flush—but you begin to speculate as to why the wise crack, and psychoanalyse the girl who made it—not entirely to her credit.

So our personalities are built up in this complex social grouping amidst which we live. Popularity in certain groups is by no means desirable. Being liked by everybody is not a goal to strive for. Nor, will I say, is liking everybody. We may have a human interest in everybody, and sympathy for the poor specimens, but I would scarcely respect my powers of discrimination and appreciation if I could not roundly dislike a few people, and be totally indifferent to a large number of those who come within my horizon day after day. I may like them or not as later situations develop, but for the time being, I need waste no emotional energy upon them. People come and go for years in my circle about whom I am never conscious of needing to consider "Do I like them? Do they like me?"

"The crush" and allied problems. Perhaps there is no subject I would rather avoid than that of perverted emotions in the social groupings of young people. So much has been said about the relations between men and women—especially young men and women, college men and women, that no word of mine could clarify the subject. In a book called *Undergraduates,* by R. H. Edwards, J. M. Artman, and Galen M. Fisher, there is a chapter on "The Relations of Men and Women," which reports surveys of several large colleges upon such topics as social drinking, smoking, dancing, "petting," and sex relations.

I have had frequent inquiries, and requests for counsel, and have listened to stories involving sad, tragic, or pathetic emotional problems. The girl who loves hopelessly is all too common. The boy who has become entangled in an emotional situation is caught between half-fledged ideas of modern sex-equality, and old ideals of chivalry, loyalty, and "a man's honor." There

are so many love problems that it is very hard to know where one may have a helpful word to say.

Finally, after looking over my "cases" and "problems," I have discovered that the most perplexing and soul-destroying of them all seems to be what is known as "the crush." And search as I have, no authority seems to give much constructive, scientific insight into that experience. I shall choose one case —and this one not a college student, but a woman whose hair was turning gray. She was—and is—a fine woman, doing a fine bit of religious work with young girls. And this is her story.

"About three years ago a friend of mine, some years older, wrote me that her daughter was coming to my town to work, and asked me to save her from loneliness. This girl of twenty proved to be the loveliest and most loving person I have ever known. She was young and gay and full of friendliness for everybody. Within a week after her arrival I was so completely infatuated that I lost all my will power. I scarcely even cared what she thought of me, and yet I was wild if I even imagined she did not adore me. Of course I soon brought her to live with me.

"Formerly I had been contented with my work, proud of its importance and busy with its growing demands. Now I did my work only to draw my salary that I might have money to lavish on my dearest one.

"She had come with admiration for me because of things her mother had told her, and felt very much flattered at my love, and I know responded. But I could not leave her alone —I wanted to absorb her. It was all I could do to control indecent impulses—but only a dim sense of the shock to her and the fear of her withdrawal constrained me. I had no sense of myself at all."

Of course, this state of affairs could not last, and by the time I was consulted, the young woman had managed to escape after months of emotional storms and battling wills. The older woman had come near wrecking the health and balance of the younger—she stood by the fence in the sunshine, telling me

all this, her mind telling me all this and rather remote from the body and emotions, which were in torment asking for the beloved object back again.

Why should I tell this story? Because, with variations, it is repeated in every college in America. The infatuation of opposite sexes is regarded as a normal thing, because, under the guise of love, it leads to marriage and the perpetuation of the race. This is called heterosexuality—desirable in the progress of emotional development.

But along the road somewhere there may be a failure of the normal growth. Sometimes no suitable friendships with members of the opposite sex are available. Epidemics of "crushes" are frequent in women's schools where insufficient provision is made for seeing men and for the normal emotional reactions —"flirting," falling in love and falling out again, and the other preparations for natural adulthood.

It is natural for girls and boys to want each others' company. At a girls' school which the over-sheltered girls of the very wealthy attended, the noon hour was spent in innocuous flirting with the conductors of passing street cars, clandestine visits to a forbidden engine house, and at all hours flirting with their own chauffeurs, who sometimes made errands about the school for the purpose.

Girls who fail to satisfy their instincts with normal heterosexual social life are liable to a more or less intense homosexual fixation, popularly known as a "crush."

But these cases are usually short-lived, though they may become epidemic, and, like smallpox, in the course of the epidemic some tragic cases may develop.

These serious cases are definitely morbid and belong to a specialist. They are more often symptomatic of deep-seated complexes and subconscious conditions far beyond the diagnosis of an ordinary dean or counselor. Too often the immediate emotional behavior has its roots in defeated childhood loves, in jealousies and conflicts of the remote past.

Nearly always there develops a trace of heterosexuality in the relationship between two women, if the relationship persists for any length of time, for even though the mutuality of the crush may not be equal, the situation is shared, and both natures are tremendously modified by it. One girl, or woman, assumes the feminine rôle—the sweet and yielding; the other the masculine—protective and dominating.

I am sure you all realize that in this description of morbid emotional relations between women I do not fail to appreciate the beautiful friendships which occur all around us. Women live together and love each other for years and through their exquisite friendship display the possibilities of full and normal lives lived without husband and children.

I have not described the masculine counterpart of the crush—the homosexuel. I think he is more rare, and if not, he is surely more secretive in his relations. He too needs the advice and help of a specialist in human conduct. And as for friendships among men, these are symbols from ancient times—Jonathan and David, Damon and Pythias, Boswell and Samuel Johnson.

If any one of you is the victim of a lover, seek help from one who knows how to help you. Do not temporize or wait, for no situation stamps itself upon you more quickly, and is more difficult to survive unmarred. If you are swamped by an obsession to love another of your own sex, ask your most reliable adviser to recommend a psychoanalyst or psychiatrist who may help you discover the emotional disease which lies dormant in you.

How to live socially well. A college senior was telling his professor good-by. They had been friends for four years. The boy said, "I would feel better equipped for life if I could go out with a set of rules for getting along with people, as a result of my four years here at ——. I ought to be able to formulate some rules after all my experiences and college education."

Together that May afternoon, the old professor and the young senior in cap and gown wrote out the following rules:

1. Meet people with a quiet dignity, a sincere and pleased attitude.

2. Respect yourself in every situation. No great man is greater to you than yourself.

3. Modesty is a necessary balance to self-respect; all others have an innate dignity equal to your own.

4. Interest in others should be genuine; but they too are interested in you and frankness about yourself is an asset.

5. Be kind, not critical; sympathetic and appreciative, not curious nor flattering.

6. Do not tell unpleasant truths gratuitously, but on occasion do not fear truth, whether you tell it or listen to it.

7. Loyalty and good sportsmanship are high virtues in the game of life.

8. A sense of humor, a perspective view, and tolerance come with age to him who continues to learn.

9. Dependability is a chief social virtue.

10. A high regard for oneself is essential to the proper appreciation of others.

CHAPTER XI

LEARNING TO BE A LEADER

Letter of freshman to dean:

". . . I have not had any chance here in —— High School to win success in student activities, because the school is too large, and perhaps I have been shy. But I should like to turn over a new leaf and start right when I enter college."

. . . "How does a fellow get to be a somebody, anyway?"

This question was blurted out in the hall, in a casual encounter; and that led to the present chapter.

They who lead, and they who follow. From the beginning of time there have been two classes of people, those who give orders and those who take orders; whether the society be a democracy, an aristocracy, or a despotism,[1] there are leaders and followers.

Last year one of our most perspicacious educators challenged the effectiveness of American education for the production of leaders who advance the ideals for which public education is established. He says:

" 'Take my own two universities. . . . They turn out about five thousand "graduates" a year. These young men and women have been fed the best American educational viands obtainable. From such meat the red blood of youth should strive for idealism in American life as the best and most profitable policy, if for no other reason. When you multiply this army of graduates up to the hundred thousand turned out by all our schools of higher learning each year, and consider what they do, you begin to realize the failure of the system.

" 'The alumni root for the football team.'

" 'They do not consciously form a living nucleus for the

[1] Most of us think of an anarchy as a society in which there will be no "followers," everyone will go his own way and yield to no leadership.

American ideal. The great multitude of college-bred should by now, had they been taught and led, have set in motion the evangelism that the founders saw in their vision and that every real educator is devoted to promote. That graduate horde has not done this thing. There is no indication, save in sporadic instances, that the word "higher" belongs in our system. Our educated thousands are not numerously going higher. Like the educated Indian, they step out from the higher institutions and go back to the blanket.' "[2]

Another educator, Dr. James Earl Russell, in a recent magazine calls attention to the typically democratic leadership which he thinks is being developed by our methods of teaching in the public school.[3] He says:

"The ladder from kindergarten to university has made easy climbing from rung to rung; the instruction offered has at least made us a reading people if it has not always succeeded in cultivating a taste for what is worth reading; professional needs have had more than a fair share of attention; and prevailing methods of teaching have emphasized self-reliance and self-direction. It would be hard to find a method of teaching more effective than the recitation in developing self-determination in the learner even though it be an excuse for incompetence in the teacher and productive of guesswork in the student."

I think most of us are unaware of the tremendous amount of leadership—intelligent, serious, purposive leadership—that is actually engaged in conducting American affairs to-day. There are tens of thousands of school principals, superintendents, or school board members who are administering in small, almost independent units the most effective educational program in the world. There are thousands of preachers and laymen conducting an experiment in religious living all over America

[2] Dr. William MacAndrew, in *School and Society*, December, 1928. Reprinted by permission of The Science Press.

[3] *Journal of Adult Education*, June, 1929. Reprinted by permission of American Association for Adult Education.

without detailed orders from a head, without much supervision from any source, and in many cases without any kind of specific training.

A democracy is the leader's opportunity. Think of all the lodges, clubs, and associations which are contributing untold values to the social group. Nowhere except in a free democracy could millions of independent activities go on with only minor subservience to laws, laws themselves made by a federal government involving several thousand different persons during a generation; by forty-eight different governors and legislatures; by thousands of aldermen and mayors.

It is this society in which you young people live. In India the opportunities for leadership are so insignificant as to offer little outlook for ambition. In America you have only to choose your field, and work steadfastly toward the goal, with every chance of ultimate success—if your efforts are intelligent, and unavoidable handicaps do not interfere. Are young people conscious of the opportunities and obligations surrounding them? and what are they saying about it all?

Anonymous papers told me about school worries. First:

"I am afraid I will spend more money than I should. . . ."

Second:

"I would be willing to study night and day if I could only please my parents. I am constantly worrying about this. . . ."

And lastly:

"I worry too about never being a leader. It seems that here at school I don't have confidence in myself to stand up at a meeting and express myself. When I was in high school I always had confidence; of course it was a small high school, but it seems terrible to come to college and not do anything."

"Here is my greatest worry—What does the future hold for me? I am ambitious but have no talents—I do want to do something worth while with my life so that I may feel I have not taken everything this world offers to us mortals, and have not left it better for my existence."

Discovery of leadership material. In Chapter IX, p. 105, Professor Woodworth was quoted as saying that students in college tend to be above the average in intelligence. Since Woodworth's book was written the pressure of mass education upon college facilities has raised still higher the level of student ability. Colleges are compelled to select their students with some rigidness. They use entrance examinations, rating sheets, intelligence tests, and elimination rules.

During the World War the army tests showed that the best officer material comes from the upper ten per cent of the intelligence scale. In college it is found that on the average the best students rank well up in the tests. Certain industries use tests to discover the best workmen, applicants for civil service positions are employed according to their rank on an examination.

We are in a world which is utilizing every device to find those who are capable of contributing in a constructive way to its progress. The state has set up an elaborate system of education to foster whatever specialized abilities are present in its children.

Educated leadership is the most significant need in human life to-day. The man or woman who can step to the front of a group and lead them intelligently and acceptably toward their finest ideals is the creative factor in human evolution.

Such a leader must be able, first, to conceive in imagination the needs and highest aspirations of the particular group to be led; second, to make conscious, real, and important to themselves their own needs and aspirations; and, third, to make some concrete plan which will lead to action satisfying their conscious needs and realizing their aspirations. A leader cannot be a genius burning with an idea beyond the comprehension of his group. He must be a man who knows the techniques of "selling his idea," of securing approval, and of developing a plan of corporate action.

It is because of the open door to success that young people

want to know what they can do to succeed. *"What must I do to succeed?"* You remember the hunter who went out "for to bag some game," but returned empty-handed, "though he shot and he shot," but "he shot in general" and not in particular.

I think most of us are dreaming of success "in general," not of any particular fine bit of work to be accomplished. The girl whose diary was referred to sometimes imagined herself a great singer, sometimes an accomplished artist, and again she visioned herself a famous writer. Meanwhile she was practicing none of these arts, but was merely daydreaming.

One of my student friends is quite conscious of this as a defect of his character. He writes:

"My greatest worry is what I believe a psychologist would call a weak character. For years I have expected to become famous. As a child at school I used to sit idle over my lesson, thinking how surprised my teacher would be some day, and it did not matter much then that I failed, as I was going to be greater than anyone else. I formed habits then which have come now to dominate my life. All my failures I take lightly and spend my time imagining myself the hero of the football field, or announcing my engagement to some girl whom all the men admire. I *know* I have the stuff in me too, only this one bad habit of mine is making me the worst kind of failure. Is there anything one can do to make oneself work instead of dream?"

Such a dreamer will probably never succeed unless he finds psychiatric help outside himself. His childhood habits have become so fixed that his own will can scarcely overcome them. Daydreaming which takes the place of constructive action, and which the dreamer uses for his satisfaction, saps the will power as surely as does the drug habit.

It is to the man or woman who tries to succeed by daily efforts that this chapter is dedicated. Here are some suggestions for your immediate use. You do not need to decide upon your life-work in order to cultivate the qualities and form the habits which will be necessary if you are to be a leader

rather than a follower; and if you are a reader of these pages, the chances are a thousand to one that you have the qualities of leadership. The very fact of your reading this book is an indication of your interest in the problems of effective living. How will you answer these questions?

Do I like people?

Do I have ideas of things to do?

Can I interest other people in carrying out plans with me?

Do I want to count for something with the people around me?

Next it is advisable to discover your own special interests. Dissipation of energy and mercurial attention to too many things are the most serious faults of potential leaders. For a week you are excited about fraternity affairs, then you switch off to class elections, but soon become absorbed in a committee to improve the college paper. Before that committee has done much you decide to make a showing in chemistry I, and about the time you have caught up with the class you are put on a committee for publicity for the Thanksgiving game. You have a fine sense of being busy, trusted, important—but one year, two years, four years pass and you have not done any one constructive thing thoroughly.

My theory is that a student should find some important work to do and do it well. Far be it from me to advise that this work should frequently be class work! Especially in view of the notorious scorn of a "grind" in some student bodies! But it sometimes succeeds.

Recently I undertook to discover what kinds of people in a certain college were most genuinely admired. I asked a group of girls and boys to answer seriously the following questions:

(1) What girl do you admire most?.....(name)
Why? Would you care to emulate her?
(2) What boy do you admire most?.....(name)
Why? Would you care to emulate him?
(3) What qualities in a man or woman do you most respect?

Every person named ranked from good to very superior in scholarship, although not all persons voiced this special superiority in their reasons for their admiration.

Every person named had a good reputation for integrity, fair play, and cheerfulness. And with only one or two exceptions among the thirty or more different persons mentioned, they would be judged by anyone as leaders in classroom activities. The fact that they did good class work was mentioned as frequently as any other single quality. The "grind" is not unpopular because he studies hard, but because he lacks social and other admired qualities.

Qualities of a leader. There is a good deal of discussion of the kind of man a leader must be. One point of view was presented in a newspaper account of an address at a meeting of personnel men in industries which quoted the speaker as saying that a successful business executive should typically be aggressive, crude, have a loud, commanding voice, use plain, even rough language on occasion. He should be dependable, honest, and sincere; he should be hard-hearted and selfish. He need not easily get others' viewpoints or listen sympathetically to their personal affairs. The same speaker said much more to the same point (as quoted in the newspaper).

This description of "a typical successful executive" is somewhat different from the ideal a high-minded professor would like to hold up before his students.

Of course there are qualities of leadership specific to each job, just as the traits described above were explicitly meant for executives in industry. Whether we like it academically or not, it takes one kind of a man to make a good mayor and another kind of a man to make a good Y. M. C. A. secretary. Maybe that will not be so one hundred years from now, when men we hope will be better men, and will differ not so much in character traits as in the technical training they will have for their professions.

Meanwhile, let us list some of the most important leader-

ship traits as implied in one of the standardized tests given school children to detect their abilities:

composed
not embarrassed
eager to express himself (before a group)
prefers group activities
argumentative
persuasive
likes peppy activities
energetic
impetuous
impulsive
live curiosity
self-confident
self-reliant
strong initiative
hearty and cordial
forms acquaintanceships easily
independent
rather insensitive
rather indifferent to others' opinion
carefree
not exclusive in games
quick and decisive in movement
welcomes changes
emotions readily expressed
inclined to bluff
perhaps conceited
frank, talkative[4]

Can you go down this list and grade yourself A, B, C, or D on each item? If so, you will have some idea of your confidence in yourself. *Whether your judgment is right or wrong,* what you think about yourself is the most important of all

[4] Adapted from the *Iowa Introversion-Extroversion Rating Scale* (modified by Maxfield).

factors in your behavior. If you think you are leadership material, you will act in a dominant manner; if you think you are not gifted with leadership ability you will hesitate before the impetus of some more confident soul.

Let the reader himself make a list of all the qualities he likes to see in a leader and would like to cultivate in himself.

Qualities of a follower. It is equally illuminating to see what the qualities of one who is not a leader may be. It is no disgrace to be a follower, in fact, most of us are not destined to be leaders either by our stars or by our inner talents. The people whom we most love, the people who do the bigger share of the world's work, are followers. The chairman of the committee plans the game, but a dozen workers sell the tickets. I may think of having a class party, but blessings on the fine, unselfish, devoted group who bake the cookies, make the punch, decorate the rooms, and finally wash the dishes and clear up the debris.

By using the same test sheet as the one from which our list of traits above was compiled we find the following list of traits for the foreordained followers:

self-conscious
easily embarrassed
timid or bashful
avoids talking before groups
prefers to work and play alone
agrees readily with others' wishes
compliant and yielding
good in details
careful
deliberate
slow in making decisions
cautious
tends to detachment from environment
lacking in initiative

reserved or distant
does not form acquaintance readily
gloomy or moody
sensitive, easily hurt
reacts strongly to praise or blame
worries
"crosses bridges before he comes to them"
slow in movement
prefers the habitual to the new
marked perseverance
emotions not freely expressed
secretive
"shut-in"
does not talk unless spoken to
modest
unassuming
underestimates his own abilities

Perhaps if you too make a list of the traits you observe in some of the "followers" whom you know, you will have a different list.

This list, and the one similar to it given on the preceding topic, are the names of traits, qualities, or activities which describe persons whom the psychologists call *extroverts* and *introverts*. Since these two words are frequently used by psychologists, and are coming into rather wide use in general writing, perhaps the reader would like some word of explanation. Briefly, the extrovert is usually more interested in persons and things outside himself, and does not tend to think first of how they affect him. On the other hand, the introvert tends to think first how any person or event is going to affect himself. The introvert constantly judges the world in terms of his own feelings, while the extrovert is absorbed in observing how people and things act and what happens to them. The two lists given above, when set side by side, exhibit the antithesis meant to be expressed in these two terms.

Very few people are completely extrovert, or introvert; almost everyone is a judicious mixture, or "ambivert."

"The nameless saints." I know it is true that in America we are inclined to magnify the leader and belittle the follower. Standards have ever been set by the vociferous fraction of the social group. If you will run down the list of traits of an introvert, who is not by nature endowed with the qualities designating leadership ability, you will find that in almost every one there is a hint of inferiority. We Americans object to one who "likes to work alone," who is "compliant and willing," and we have a faint smile, almost a sneer for the "poor boob" who is satisfied with details, is "careful," and "slow in making decisions." How we do admire some one "snappy" and "quick on the trigger"—even when wrong!

But I want to quote from a privately published memorial address by Dr. N. C. Chaney, for many years the beloved superintendent of the Youngstown, Ohio, schools. Doctor Chaney writes to commemorate *The Nameless Saints:*

"As I have listened now, and year after year, to worthy and becoming memorials paid to a *few* of the more prominent of all those who have given faithful and efficient service, I am constrained to think of the *many* who have lived good lives, taught well, and have fallen into wakeless sleep in quiet and sequestered places, whose names never come up here for honorable mention or professional memorial. They live, they serve, they die, and this State Association does not know their names.

"Yet they have done well the teacher's great distinguishing deed and have entered into immortal memory in uneventful places where they have served with great success a grateful people. . . . For it is not the size of the place nor the number of the people, but the quality of the service that counts.

"It is better to be precious to a few than called great by many."[5]

[5] Reprinted by permission.

Then this author quotes Kipling's poem of an explorer all alone in the savage silence of nature:

"Well I know who'll take the credit—all the clever chaps that followed—
Came a dozen men together—never knew my desert fears;
Tracked me by the camps I'd quitted, used the water holes I'd hallowed;
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be called the Pioneers!"[6]

Some day we will attach new meanings to the terms which designate the boy or girl, man or woman, whose life is dedicated to carrying on dutifully the everyday work so brilliantly planned by another—work which the planner would never do—could never do. All of you students know how clever the leader is with his ideas, his ideas which are grand, but hazy; which sound splendid as he enthusiastically expounds them, but which the "committee" must make come true. There are glorious towers without foundations, graceful balconies without stairways, magnificent front elevations, trees, flower-beds, and fountains—but no solid rooms behind. It is the committee trying to realize the idea who must find ways and means, foundation stones, and steps to the balconies of the vision.

"We shall conquer the world," says Napoleon. But the private soldiers, the cooks and gunsmiths and clothiers slaved to make the dream come true—while Napoleon merely marched at the head and planned for the rest to do.

What, then, is the incentive of the follower? Why should he work for others' glory? Set type for the Annual edited by another? Hustle around for votes to elect another Queen o' the May? Sell tickets at the door while others occupy the platform?

To each human being is set a work to be done, and work

[6] From *The Five Nations*, copyright, 1903, by Rudyard Kipling, and reprinted by permission of A. P. Watt & Son, Agents, and Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., publishers.

well done is the only satisfying reward. The leader is *never satisfied.* Does he compete for a prize? The prize when won merely beckons on to try for something else. Glory, fame, popularity are *never* reached—they are always ahead, like the pot of gold at the rainbow's end. No Alexander ever conquered the world and found his end achieved. A conquered world brings to him only a sigh of dissatisfaction that there are no more worlds to conquer—the conquest when made is paltry.

The follower has greater chance of success and of reward than has the leader. He *knows* when he has done his part well, and so do his "comrades in arms" who with him have done the real creative work of taking a nebulous plan, or idea, and making it real in actual life. The follower makes mistakes —but they are not conspicuous. He is spared the acute criticisms, embarrassments, disasters, and disappointments of one who walks in the limelight.

Let us not belittle the follower with a list of qualities which hint at subtle inferiorities—this list was probably made by an extrovert who "gloried in his infirmities" of independence, conceit, decisiveness, and boastfulness.

Problems of leadership. There are the "vices" of leadership and the "vices" of following, as well as the virtues. The successful extrovert often becomes spoiled by his success, just as the introvert may become spoiled by failure to win attention. A man who does all the work and gets none of the glory may find scant satisfaction in the inner realization of his success. It is just as important for the leader to secure a philosophy of life which will preserve his perspective, as it is for the follower to accept for himself the satisfying compensation of a job well done. Most of the problems which come to us are from persons dissatisfied with their status. Those quoted at the beginning of the chapter were such. Here is a girl in a large coeducational school. She writes:

"I thought psychology would help me on a personal problem which is very serious to me. I always imagined I would

be a success in college so that I could go back to (a small town) and hold a proud place. But in this big school I don't "rate" at all. I am the most insignificant atom here. I can't decide why. I dress well, make friends, date plenty, and have even made a fairly good sorority. But I haven't been able to do anything at all in my college activity. Why?"

This is a boy from a wealthy suburb:

"At home I was compelled (by nature of his father's occupation as a school superintendent, I think) to be with a class of boys and girls who had plenty of money while I had none at all. When I was a senior in high school I suddenly woke up to the fact that they were patronizing me. To be perfectly fair to them, I think before that time we had been only youngsters together, and that we all realized about the same time the real difference in our social positions. They took me places in their autos—but when one boy offered to pay my senior class dues I cut square off from the crowd. That year I was a pariah.

"Then I came here, thinking there would be plenty more like me. There are, but something has happened to me. Previously I led the crowd—I was always the ringleader in all the fun and all the mischief. But here I don't catch hold."

Here is another boy:

"My high-school principal said the very last thing, last spring, 'I'll be proud of you, my boy.' Now, here I am, in college, and the second term is half over. I haven't made my place, I haven't the least idea how, and what I am afraid of most is that he will be disappointed."

The causes of most of these cases is not lack of ability, but lack of understanding of the psychological principles of leadership. We shall proceed, then, with that discussion.

Psychological principles of leadership. *The leader is made, not born, although certain characteristics may be innate.* Some of the qualities which he cultivates should be started in the earliest years of childhood. On the other hand, some of the happenings of early childhood may be a lifelong handicap to him in acquiring his leadership training.

One writer, Kenneth R. LaVoy, says, in *School and Society:* "The desire to be a leader is inherent in all of us. But whether we become leaders depends in part on early environment and the personalities with whom we come in contact. The desire for leadership may be repressed by lack of understanding on the part of parents and teachers. Other factors may tend to develop emotional conflicts which make leadership impossible. . . .

"To develop leadership we must encourage responsibility, and this can only be done by putting trust and faith in boys.

"One of the paramount needs of the present age is that of responsible trustworthy leaders."

The leader must acquire certain specific "leadership qualities." He must have fine qualities of character, good health, and the garden variety of intelligence at least, in common with other successful persons, whether they be leaders or followers.

In addition he must have other attributes in a degree and of a nature suited to the situation in which leadership is to function.

Can you be depended on without "follow-up" and prodding? I have known a few people in my life to whom I could turn over a job and forget it. When the time came for those people to deliver, the job was done. Any of you know how rare such people are, and how precious.

Are you the person who works at a job but has to get help right along? or do you keep pestering your supervisors with the fact that you are busy? There are many people to whom I have to assign duties, but it would be much easier to do the things myself. Of course, one doesn't count little children, or students who are being taught. But there is the dressmaker whom I employ to remodel my old coat. She knows her job—but she has to call me up a dozen times—once to tell me she is cutting the lining extra long so it will fit better; once to say that she will have the coat ready when promised, etc., etc.

Some weeks ago I had a vacancy in my office for a secre-

tary. One woman seemed especially well qualified. I decided to try her for a day before actually employing her, and on a good pretext I brought her in. Well, I couldn't work at all that day—not because of teaching her a new job, but for being called on constantly to admire her proficiency, to co-operate in her letter-writing, to discuss *pros* and *cons* of *her* end of the business. She was not employed by me.

The leader must be an expert in his chosen field. "There is always room at the top" is perennially true. One would think that in all this world of stenographers one of the best-paying campus positions would not go begging all summer for lack of a thoroughly qualified applicant.

Within a month I've had persons tell me, "I could place four or five first-class well-prepared women in ——" (naming the fields).

"We need a new president for our organization, but have canvassed every person in the State of —— without finding one who knows the work and can meet the other requirements."

It is not as if there were something extremely peculiar about these positions, either. They do not require exceptional genius. Edison has selected one who he hopes will be his successor. This youth is probably no genius, merely a fine, hard-working, intelligent American boy, who has an unusual interest in the problems which engage Mr. Edison.

Unfortunately, too few people know their chosen work well enough to be experts in it. Or if they know the specific job, they may not know how to control the situation in which the job is usually set. For instance, a girl may have speed on the typewriter, and yet not be self-directing in finding her way in a new office. She may have all the technical training of a millinery school, yet be helpless in planning a day of work, in sizing up her need of material, in meeting an emergency, or in readjusting her schedule for a rush order.

The chairman of the ticket committee must know more about printing and selling tickets than anybody else, for he

has to direct the committee. The conductor of an orchestra must group his instruments, and see his program as an artistic whole, while the separate pieces must learn how to follow his lead, and compose his picture.

Have you forceful speech, clear enunciation, pleasant but easily emphatic voice?

Does your appearance distract attention from your mission, to yourself?

Do you concentrate on one job till you master it and secure results?

Are you absolutely responsible? If you promise to do a thing, can you be depended on to do it?

You can learn to meet all the requirements involved in these questions. It becomes a matter of habit-formation. "Launch yourselves with a strong initiative."

"Never suffer an exception to occur."

"Secure success at the outset."

"Seize the very first opportunity to act on every resolution you make."

"Keep the faculty of effort alive by a little gratuitous exercise every day."

"Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning, to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away."[7]

I wonder if, now, you have a clear picture of a leader? One who is forceful, well liked, makes a good appearance,

[7] William James, *Psychology, Briefer Course,* chapter on "Habit," pp. 120-150. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

wins respect because he "knows his stuff, and how to put it across," and is absolutely reliable, responsible, carrying his job clear through to a full and successful completeness.

Have you, also, a clear idea of how you may learn to become such a leader? By selecting the jobs you want to do—your field of activity; by learning all there is to know in that field; by working steadily and intelligently and persistently at the duties which the leader must perform; by planning with people, discussing with them, interesting them, considering their needs, understanding and accepting their contributions—in short,

Acquire the information or skill.

Interest the group and comprehend their needs.

Organize the group around a plan.

Carry out the plan to a successful end.

Leadership is acquired by many little activities of leading —a committee, a class play, an election where you make the plan and elect your candidate through organizing the group (often that is far more important than being elected); eventually gaining skill which gives power over many in the big world.

CHAPTER XII

DEVELOPING CHARACTER: WHAT KIND OF A PERSON DO YOU WANT TO BE?

We all have dreams of being great or influential or rich or beautiful. If we were to try, we could write down just exactly the sort of person we most want to become. The following quotation from the diary of a thirteen-year-old girl will illustrate what I mean:

"I've been on the moss under my pine trees all afternoon, just lying still looking at the sky, or sitting on my wishing stone and thinking what I'd like to be—no, what I'm *going to be* some day.

"I think most of all I want to have *power over people.* I know I haven't any wonderful voice. I think it will be power through making pictures—pictures of mountains, and of storms, of the storms on my lake, of the sunlight on my mountain—and pictures of trees in winter—these firs of our Northwest Corner.

"No, I don't quite know how I'll get that power, but I'm going after it hard *some* way. . . .

"And I'm going to be popular. But *everything* is against me. Grace is popular because she has a sympathetic voice. . . .

"And I want to be famous, but I guess a person can't just decide and *be* famous. Anyhow that mostly happens when a person is too old, or dead."

Developing Personality. By the time men and women are in college their ideas of themselves have become clarified. They know something of their own strength and weakness. But they have not always found out how to develop their strong points or to overcome their weaknesses.

There is much writing recently about developing character and personality. Groups of college students, and even high-school students, have discussed the qualities they ought to

cultivate in order to be successful men and women. Dr. Werrett Wallace Charters started the ball rolling in a public way when he gave out an interview published in a popular magazine giving explicit directions for attaining some of our ideals and overcoming some of our faults.[1] That was a good many years ago. Since that time a great deal of attention has been paid to ways of attaining the Good, the True, and the Beautiful life. The best summary which has been made of popular writings, of numerous studies, and of expert research occurs in Doctor Charters' book *The Teaching of Ideals* (1927). In Chapter III of this book Doctor Charters discusses "The Selection of Ideals." The first list of ideals which he gives is a list compiled by Benjamin Franklin for his own guidance and discipline. This is Franklin's list: temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquillity, chastity, and humility. The methods which Franklin used to cultivate these traits of character are to be recommended, and since his autobiography should be owned by everyone and also is in every school and public library, the reader is referred to it.[2]

In 1916 a prize of five thousand dollars was awarded under the auspices of the Character Education Institute, for the best Children's Code of Morals.

This prize was awarded to Mr. William J. Hutchins, and may be found on pp. 51-53 of *The Teaching of Ideals* (Charters).

COLLIER'S CODE
(Abbreviated)

If I want to be a happy, useful citizen I must have:
Courage and *Hope*—I must be brave.
Wisdom—I must act wisely.

[1] Reported by M. K. Wisehart and published in *The American Magazine*, April, 1924. Reprinted by permission of The Crowell Publishing Company.

[2] Davidson, H. A., Editor, *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, p. 140ff.

Industry and *Good Habits*—I must make my character strong.

Knowledge and *Usefulness*—I must make my mind strong.

Truth and *Honesty*—I must be truthful and honest.

Healthfulness and *Cleanliness*—I must make my body strong.

Helpfulness and *Unselfishness*—I must use my strength to help others who need help.

Charity—I must love others.

Humility and *Reverence*—I must know that there are always more things to learn.

Faith and *Responsibility*—I must do all these things because I am accountable to God and to humanity for how I live and how I can help my fellows, and for the extent to which my fellows may trust and depend upon me.[3]

In Denver, Colorado, a list of ideals for high-school boys and girls was prepared and has been made the basis for the character-training program of the Denver schools.

In comparison consider an example when young people come together and formulate ideals for their own strivings. This is the way some college girls state their ideals:

"**S**tephens College girls will strive to be:
Tireless and *forceful* in doing
Everything they set their minds to do;
Proud of their natural endowment of
H*ealth* and determined to guard it.
Ever willing to discipline themselves;
Never failing in *cheerfulness* and poise;
Sincere and *honest* in word and deed;

C*ourteous* in speech, and action,
Overlooking all false social barriers;
Lovers of careful and exact *scholarship,*
L*overs* too of beauty, wherever found;
Ever reverent toward the *spiritual;*
Generous in womanly *service,* whether
Enlisted for home, friend, or community."

[3] See Charters: *The Teaching of Ideals,* pp. 51-55.

In the former group I chose at random a few of the examples which indicate that there is much thinking going on concerning the best way to help young people to strive toward high ideals and successful living.

I might go on for pages with examples like the Stephens College girls, showing that many persons and groups are trying to put into words for their own direction the longings and strivings and goals of their lives. How can we believe that young people will think that the former lists of ideals are old-fashioned when there was such a striking similarity between their own lists and the lists prepared by educators.

"But," you say, "we know *what* we want to be. Will you tell us how we may attain these ideals. It is easy enough to want to be forceful, healthy, cheerful, popular, and success is what we are all after. Tell us how to get these things, give us something new. What we want is a sure-fire recipe." And in a vague way that is what you come to college for. You are searching out some way to realize your deepest ambitions, your truest aims—how to get out of life what you want.

What does college do for you? College is handing out to you what it thinks you ought to have—courses in English and required mathematics. If this isn't what at the moment you want, who knows but you need it anyway, to round you out and help you find yourself? If somebody was wise enough to unravel it all and explain it to you, or if life would some way reveal it to you, maybe even physical education, mathematics, psychology, and all the rest would prove to be the things which in the end will help you get what you want out of yourself and out of life.

Personality for sale. *Can* college—or anything or anybody on the college campus—help you toward your inmost wants? I suspect the answer to this question depends largely on what price you are yourself willing to pay to have your wants satisfied. If you are after shortcuts, if you wish to *buy* personality, then you will probably be attracted by certain

current advertisements which offer to sell you personality at so much a trait. Personality, Power, "It," Popularity, Success, with capital letters. All these treasures are advertised for sale in magazines displayed in drug-store windows. What a temptation for the gullible!

One such magazine is before me as I write. On every page is spread some alluring promise of wonderful self-development—for sale at a price. Thousands of wistful, ambitious, hopeful young people buy. More thousands of despairing, failing people buy. There is magic in the term "psychology," so it is the catchword used in the advertisements. The traits that will make you successful (and they will if you can achieve them) are set out in black-faced type. "You can be anything you want to be, have your desires for popularity and for social and financial success fulfilled. You can accomplish anything not in violation of natural law that you want to accomplish." Listen to this:

"The Essence of a College Education
Boiled Down in Two Massive Volumes"

And another:

"Your High School Education in These Twelve
Question and Answer Books"

Again:

"Speechless When a Few Words Would Have Made Me!
But now I can face the largest audience without a trace of stage fright."

So we might go on. It is all there for sale. No desirable trait has been forgotten. No undesirable trait has been overlooked. You can achieve the one and get rid of the other so easily and quickly that it would be folly not to invest the few dollars required if these advertisements tell the truth. Do they?

Without any commercial aim or profit the *Illinois Society*

for Mental Hygiene gives the following solid rules for good living:

Pay attention. Ability to think through the present task results in mental efficiency.

Cultivate courage. Timidity, fearfulness, lack of self-confidence indicate need of mental hygiene.

Seek self-control. Not by repression of hate, fear, anger, love, and other emotions, but by diversion of these emotions into other channels through wholesome activity.

Live in the world of people. Avoidance of others, inability to adapt to groups, lack of thought for others prevent the cultivation of mental hygiene.

Develop serenity. Confusion in work, play, and study, conflict of ambitions with achievements, conflict of thoughts and feeling lead to lack of mental hygiene.

Use your mind. The exercise of the mind is as important to mental hygiene as physical exercise is to physical hygiene.

Live life. Escape from unpleasant situations through evading them, build up defenses; avoiding life is poor mental hygiene.

Self-confidence, reserve power, personal magnetism. It is in this field that the quack has the greatest number of clients and produces the most enticing advertisements. He tells you again and again that you have reserve power, and in this he is wholly right—more right than most of them know. William James told us years ago that we all have reserves of power and energy that we seldom or never draw upon. Let us for a moment consider the matter with Doctor Herrick, who approaches the question from the standpoint of the all-but-infinite possibilities of connections in the human nervous system. He says:

"The known complexity of the lines of nervous conduction within even so simple a brain as that of a frog, if mapped out in detail, would make the wiring chart of the largest electrically driven factory look as simple as a county-road map. If we

turn to the human brain, it is no exaggeration to say that a complete map of every circuit in all the telegraph and telephone lines of the North American continent would be incomparably simpler than such a chart of the nervous circuits of which we already have some knowledge. And the half of our nervous equipment has never been told. . . .

"Turning now to smaller things, the diameters of the atoms have been computed. My mathematical friend tells me that in a cubic centimeter of water the number of atoms is 10^{24}. Extending the computation, the solar system contains 10^{56} atoms, and the entire visible sidereal universe contains about 10^{66} atoms.

"Such numbers stun the imagination of the non-mathematical mind. But a little computation shows that the known complexity of the nervous connections of the human body present possibilities of associational combinations of the nerve cells among themselves that run into numbers of even greater orders of magnitude.

"The total number of cells in the human body has been estimated by Francke to be about 2.65×10^{13}, a number which is probably too small. Of this total, the larger proportion (2.25×10^{13}) are blood corpuscles which float freely in the blood stream. Donaldson estimates that there are about twelve thousand million (12×10^{9}) nerve cells or neurons in the human brain, and more than half of these, or ninety-two hundred million (9.2×10^{9}), are in the cerebral cortex. . . ."

"Every neuron of the cerebral cortex is enmeshed in a tangle of very fine nerve fibers of great complexity, some of which came from very remote parts. It is probably safe to say that the majority of the cortical neurons are directly or indirectly connected with every cortical field. This is the anatomical basis of cortical associational processes. The interconnections of these associational fibers form an anatomical mechanism which permits, during a train of cortical associations, numbers of different functional combinations of cortical

neurons that far surpass any figures ever suggested by the astronomers in measuring the distances of stars. In the cortical association centers it is the capacity for making this sort of combination and recombination for the nervous elements that determines the practical value of the system.

"During a few minutes of intense cortical activity the number of interneuronic connections actually made (counting also those that are activated more than once in different associational patterns) may well be as great as the total number of atoms in the solar system. Certainly, not all anatomically present connections of nervous elements are ever used, but the *potentialities* of diversity of cortical associational combinations are practically unlimited and the personal experience of the individual is probably an important factor in determining which of these possibilities will be actually realized. . . .

"These cortical potentialities form the organic background of those reserves of power and capacity and those latent possibilities of education and constructive thinking that are present in all of us and yet too often never come to practical expression, as James has so graphically portrayed in his discussion of *The Energies of Men* (1907)."[4]

Your advertiser *knows* you have reserve power, but you also know it as well as he. His only assistance is to help you tap it and make it effective in your life, but you do not need his help for that. The most important part of his problem is to *give you confidence in your own reserve power.* Read his advertisement—he follows the well-known principle of all good advertising; he uses strong, powerful language; he talks directly to you; he *says* over and over again, "You have the power within you"—"You have capital in your bank—it is there, all you have to do is to be so convinced of it as to draw on it—make out your check, the capital is there—you can be

[4] C. Judson Herrick, *Brains of Rats and Men* (1929). Reprinted by permission of The University of Chicago Press.

freed from inferiority because I am telling you you are free," etc. The advertiser knows he has facts of nature with him.

The advertiser will give you some specific directions:

1. He will give much and strong advice about having a first-class working machine—the body.

2. He will give an elaborate exposition of the laws of mental hygiene.

3. Then he will draw on the psychological laws of emotion, suggestion, and ideo-motor activity.

He probably never read James, who states these laws better than any advertisement:

"Any voluntary and cold-blooded arousal of the so-called manifestations of a special emotion should give us the emotion itself. . . . Everyone knows how panic is increased by flight, and how the giving way to the symptoms of grief or anger increases those passions themselves. Each fit of sobbing makes the sorrow more acute, and calls forth another fit stronger still, until at last repose only ensues with lassitude and with the apparent exhaustion of the machinery. In rage, it is notorious how we work ourselves up to a climax by repeated outbreaks of expression. Refuse to express passion, and it dies. Count ten before venting your anger and its occasion seems ridiculous. Whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. On the other hand, sit all day in a moping posture, sigh, and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know: if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the *outward movements* of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistence will infallibly come, in the fading out of the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindliness in their stead. Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame.

and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it does not gradually thaw!"[5]

In this mild paragraph buried in a chapter in a psychology textbook is the key to most "success" writing. James' statement is exciting, thrilling, even wild, according to the average psychologist—yet he has only one exclamation point and one italicized idea. His English is strong—nowhere stronger than in this chapter on emotion—from the standpoint of his brother scientists! But what a dub he is, from the standpoint of the advertiser! Let a good salesman get hold of this "valuable precept in moral education." He has James as authority that "the reward of persistency will infallibly come," so he goes to it. He doesn't say much about the things you don't want in your life—James puts them first—grief, panic, anger. But he does shout in bold type what you are to do. *Smile—Stand Straight—Head up—Smile!—Brighten the eye—Look interested, Smile.* Take the attitudes of good cheer, of happiness, of success and these will "infallibly come," they will follow as the night the day. James says so—and no psychologist in the world can be quoted as better authority.

You *have* the reserve power. Take all the physical attitudes —act upon that reserve power. Persist, repeat, improve, say over and over, "Day by day, in every way, I'm getting better and better." Act it out, depend upon it. "I am I. I am better to-day, to-morrow, forever." "I have the courage to face the world, head up, eyes front."

Then after your course of lessons has given you all these directions the instructor will say frankly: "It is up to you. Here's the way. If you follow these instructions, we guarantee results." And he is within his rights—*if* you follow his instructions. He assures you you can—and the chances are you can too.

With the help of your own professor of psychology, or

[5] William James: *Psychology, Briefer Course,* pp. 382, 383. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

of your college personnel service, of your adviser or dean, doctor or best friend you can do for yourself anything the advertisers in a *Success Magazine* promise you—that is, if it can be done. If you cannot do it for yourself with the help of the knowledge gained in your college course, the advertisers certainly cannot do it for you.

To train the memory. I privately suspect that the dear scientific professors who teach psychology and physiology in our colleges are not themselves aware of the immense commercial value of the secrets they give away casually as part of the day's work. They use these precious scientific treasures as mere class assignments and examination questions. And the student growls at having to learn things he will pay out half of his allowance to buy from a well-worded advertisement.

Take, for instance, the immense amount of money somebody must turn over to keep these "Memory Schools" going. If a student will look over any good book on "How to Study" and will take it to heart; or even if he will learn his psychology assignment on memory and especially the paragraphs on memorizing, he will know how to "cultivate the memory" better than any system for sale does. For nearly all these systems depend upon antiquated and discredited methods. They do make demands on the student for practice and so either get some real results or give an illusion of it. Why can't the student do the same for his regular lesson in psychology? *How to Succeed in College,* by William F. Book, 1927 date, will cover the ground more scientifically, practically, and completely than all the memory systems in the world—*if you will do as Professor Book tells you.*

The technique of character building. I do not pretend to know all the secrets advertised for sale on the pages of the quack magazines; *but* I do know that if they are psychologically sound they are all taught in the psychology and physiology classes in every college in America. But the psychology and

physiology professors do not dispense them as prescriptions; they do not feature them in headlines and bold-face type. Perhaps college teachers do not even have the personality to "put it across." They may not be able to overcome your inner resistance, your subconscious attitude learned years ago in the grades, to resent and refuse any offering toward the subjection of your ego. You want success, you are open-minded toward the salesmanship of advertisers, you are close-mouthed to the didactic pedagogue who has spread his wares before you in humdrum routine nearly all your life. The veriest quack has so glib and convincing a sales talk that he can sell you a gold brick, whereas the scientific assayer who handed you a gold mine would be met by a refusal.

Salesmanship. In such sad disrepute is this gift of persuasion because charlatans have exploited it through the ages, that conservative teachers, preachers, doctors, business men hesitate to use it. They consider it undignified to use the power of suggestion, the magic of salesmanship to direct people's conduct, to heal their bodies, to save their souls.

What is it that has made miracles possible? What is the psychology of the mental healer? What made effective the well of Bethesda, the shrine at Lourdes, the hot spring and mud baths and spas? How did Alexander Dowie accumulate his following, who plastered the church walls at Zion City with crutches, ear trumpets, and wooden legs? What brought the sick to Coué and sent them away well?

In few if any of the miraculous cures has there been any direct physical change. Perhaps some of the waters (as at Epsom) have cleared out the system and thus have given a physical basis for the cure. But for the most part cures are the result of "autosuggestion," a simple term for a complex psychical phenomenon, induced by a good "selling talk."

Physical hygiene—normal bodily functioning; mental hygiene—normal mind functioning; and autosuggestion are

the three factors entering into the transmutation of personality from weakness to strength, from failure to success, from worry to courage, from inferiority to superiority.

You can easily learn the simple lessons of physical hygiene from any good doctor, and practice them if you have the desire to do so. Mental hygiene too is a fairly simple and open book of information and living.

But the practice of control over mind or body, although it finally reduces to autosuggestion, may in the beginning require much outside help.

Self-Training. However, learning how to train yourself may be done. There are a few requisites:

(1) You must really *want* to do what you undertake to accomplish.

(2) You must find out how to act from someone in whom you have absolute confidence. The positiveness and "selling talk" of an advertiser give the reader confidence, which he expresses by clipping the coupon and sending his money. The personal attractiveness, positiveness, and persuasiveness of a healer or teacher win belief, and once you *begin* to think, "Here is what I want," you become open to any suggestion from that source. But the personnel service of a university or college, your dean, adviser, or a wise friend will serve you far better than any quack in Christendom.

(3) You must begin to co-operate by listening, considering, believing, adopting the suggestions, wanting them to work for you, trying them with expectation of success.

(4) You may resist at first, but if your helper is to be successful you must not be antagonistic, you must want the experiment to succeed.

(5) If your trouble has been a wrong attitude, a fear, a feeling of inability, the suggestion given by another, which you come to adopt and act upon, permanently changes your attitude, or casts out your fear.

Why cannot you always get results, that is, cures for the

blues, or worry, or ill health, from your friends who try to cheer you up, or even from your psychology teacher who tells you what is the matter?

Mostly because when you go to them you are already convinced they do not know anything about it, and cannot really do anything for you. And they themselves lack conviction of power, knowledge, experience! They have not the "salesman" attitude of mind. If all the teachers in your college would read and act upon Overstreet's *Influencing Human Behaviour,* college teaching would be transformed overnight.

Mental hygiene is the key to the whole story for you. But I insist that the key will not unlock any secrets of success, or guarantee any results unless some attention is paid to physical hygiene. Ten times out of ten we are not in a position to live the perfectly hygienic life, and we are asking to secure mental poise in spite of the fact that our situation is such that we have to do without much of the sunlight we need; we do not enjoy (and therefore we do not eat) the exact diet science would prescribe for us; and we cannot get the muscle and motor nerve exercise which meets our bodily requirements. In spite of these handicaps we want steady nerves, control over worry, vitality—pep.

"In tune with the infinite." I am not sure where the ultimate source of reserve power may abide. But I do know that our bodies and minds are channels through which it may flow if we become fit conductors for it. Doctor Herrick has computed the possibilities within our nervous system for directing energy into behavior—that is, for controlling our lives, for transforming the latent energy ready to be released into thinking, feeling, willing, action. All our puny efforts to attain power, success, poise, personal magnetism, are efforts to liberate this energy and direct it along channels which we call "striving for ideals."

The race has evolved many ways to do this. This chapter has mentioned three fundamental ways: (1) by observing the

laws of physical health; (2) by observing the laws of mental health; (3) by directing our attention and bodily postures toward the ideas and feeling we desire to possess or attain (autosuggestion).

Chapter VI described one highly specialized device for directing action and liberating energy, the race's most-used and most successful agency—prayer.

Another agency being more and more elaborately exploited is that of education. The advertiser depends upon his "propaganda of education" to get action on his goods—and he succeeds. Pedagogical experts are depending upon the slow processes of scientific education to produce character changes for improving civic and social life.

So whether we know it or not, our college education is going to do something for us. And if we open our minds and hearts to the tremendous power of the ideas doled out to us day by day, we can conceive them as a source of energy second only to the vital energy of the sun. Indeed, a modern university is an earthly edition of the center of our solar system. There is enough potential energy in one course in psychology, or sociology, or even household science, to blow our intellectual universe into smithereens—and to make a new spiritual heaven and earth out of the fragments of the old.

Every student is a dynamic creative center of infinite world force. If you can only conceive that fact, make it live and act in your experience, the earth and the fullness thereof are yours for the taking.

CHAPTER XIII

USING THIS BOOK

MANY of the students who read this little book will be interested in talking over some of the problems with their friends. They may form discussion groups for that purpose. To those of you who engage in such group study perhaps a final note of suggestion may not come amiss. To you I promised a bibliography, also.

How to read this book. Every chapter is an attempt to discuss several phases of some fundamental, vital problem which has been seriously presented to me by many students. But in no case have any final, dogmatic answers been given. Rather have I tried to make it clear throughout that each one must analyze his own peculiar and individual problem, and think it through to his own solution.

The first half of the book has to do with problems of religious experience; the second half with problems of personality. The reader who is seeking for help for himself should try to state clearly his own problem step by step, and in as dispassionate a manner as possible. Hints and techniques for guidance are all that any book can conscientiously offer.

To the discussion group leader. The chapter titles and the topics lend themselves to restatement as problem questions. The quotations from students nearly always give the kernel of a "case study," or a situation.

It is usually valuable to throw the problem into the forum by presenting the student point of view as indicated by the quotations. No doubt there will be many objections to the author's suggestions for solving the problem, particularly in the field of religion. Always a fair proportion of a discussion

group will have a hankering after an authoritative religion; they will want an inexorable Fate to which they must submit, or religious experts who will decide for them, or great leaders whom they may comfortably follow—a church which is their God.

Then there are the irreconcilables whose religious experience requires militant individualism—and unguided discussion groups containing these two elements may breed harm rather than good to the group as a whole. Co-operative understanding should be aimed at, and leadership must therefore be skillful.

All the problems attacked here are loaded with dynamite—otherwise they would not have been voiced by the students as they were. If the group leader can get the members to reading widely, as well as to discussing, the end-product of the thinking will be vitally reconstructive.

In the hope that this volume will be just a beginning and a hint, a bibliography is here included on (1) Religious Problems, (2) Learning Problems, (3) Personality Problems.

I. Religion

Ames, Edward S.: *Religion.*

Perhaps the clearest and most constructive book written; attacks directly the vital religious problems which are worrying students and other modern thinkers.

Gilkey, Charles W.: *Present-Day Dilemmas in Religion.*

I. Dilemmas True and False
II. Things Old and New
III. Practical Service and Inner Renewal
IV. Definition and Symbol
V. The Individual and the Group
VI. In the World but not of It.

Coe, George A.: *The Psychology of Religion.*

Important basic material for a serious discussion of religious development.

James, William: *The Varieties of Religious Experience.*

A classic; thrilling because of its insight into the human mind. Here the reader gets the sweep of historic fact, as well as the careful attitude of the scientist.

Wieman, Henry N.: *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth.*

One of several books by the same author. Doctor Wieman recognizes the serious reconstruction going on in religious experience, and gives a basis for thinking through to a satisfying conclusion.

Whitehead, Alfred N.: *Religion in the Making.*

Philosophic, scientific, constructive.

Eddington, A. S.: *The Nature of the Physical World.*

The metaphysical aspects of modern researches in physics. A fine chapter—"Man's Place in the Universe."

II. Learning

Book, William F.: *Learning How to Study and Work Effectively.*

Book, William F.: *How to Succeed in College.*

Both these books are worthy of a careful reading by every high-school and college student and by every adult who is interested in getting the most out of reading and study.

Crawford, C. C.: *Methods of Study.*

A well-written, concise statement of the best techniques for college and high-school study. Doctor Crawford writes from the standpoint of the student's difficulties.

III. Personality

Seabury, David: *Growing Into Life.*

The book is divided into these four main divisions: I. The Moral Transition; II. Human Motives; III. Neuroses in the Making; IV. Preventive Psychology.

Tead, Ordway: *Human Nature and Management.*

The social and philosophic significance of leaders and train-

ing for leadership, written from the standpoint of a psychologist who has associated much with workers and industrialists.

Vincent, Junius: *Ruth Talks It Over.*

A confessed "adult" advises with a young woman on the problems of friendship with men, repression of emotions, drinking, smoking, and the new freedom.

Cavan, Ruth Shonle: *Suicide.*

A scientific study; may be used as reference for discussion group. Not recommended to one reading out of curiosity.

White, William A.: *The Mechanisms of Character Formation.*

The psychiatrist and alienist writes from the most conservative psychoanalytic point of view.

Myerson, Abraham: *Foundations of Personality.*

A presentation of the psycho-physiological point of view more popular than Doctor White's and not quite so firmly grounded in proved scientific fact, although researches are tending to confirm the hypotheses here used.

Charters, W. W.: *Teaching of Ideals.*

Presenting practical suggestion for improvement of character and the attainment of effective personality.

Gordon, R. A.: *Personality.*

A most complete general account of the contribution of neurology, physiology, and the psychoanalysts to personality.

Fleischman, Doris E. (Editor): *An Outline of Careers for Women.*

"A practical guide to achievement"; forty-three vocations are well analyzed by specialists in each field.

Werner, Oscar H.: *Every College Student's Problems.*

A general account of the factors entering into success in college, especially the personality factors. Might be listed also under *Learning.*

Artman, Joseph, and Others: *Undergraduates, A Study of Morale.*

The result of a survey (by the questionnaire and interview methods) of twenty-three American colleges and universities. Personal problems are here stated at length, but very few general conclusions are possible.

POSTSCRIPT

It is the custom to address our immediate friends and assistants in a preface. Will you, to whom I am so deeply beholden, accept my acknowledgments at the rear of the book?

To President Wood, whose dreams of ten years ago are the realities of to-day, whose constant support of research and faith in slow-growing programs have made Stephens College.

To hundreds of students, many of them at Stephens College four or five years ago, some of them in other colleges, more of them scattered abroad over the country.

To three girls, Lorna, Jimmie, and Peggy, and the intimate long hours we spent together.

To a group of more than eighty business girls in the Y. W. C. A. School, Chicago, who shared their dreams and difficulties with me.

To the kindly friends who have discussed various problems of religious experience, especially Dr. Douglas Waples and Eleanor Waples, Dr. Archibald G. Baker, Dean Charles W. Gilkey and Geraldine Gilkey, and the wise, kindly man whose spirit is immortal in our hearts, Dr. Gerald Birney Smith.

Most of all, more than anyone can possibly realize, to my husband, whose direction and guidance and technical counsel have been unfailing.

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